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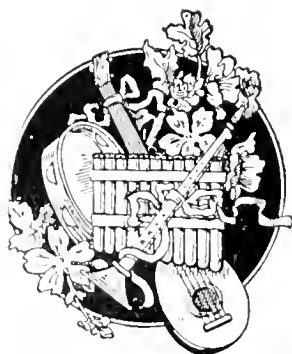


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GOOD-MORROW.

Pack clouds away and welcome day—

With night we banish sorrow ;

Sweet air, blow soft—mount, larks, aloft,

To give my love good-morrow ;

Wings from the wind, to please her mind,

Notes from the lark I'll borrow ;

Bird, prune thy wing—nightingale, sing,

To give my love good-morrow.

Wake from thy rest, robin red-breast,

Sing, birds, in every furrow ;

And from each hill let music shrill

Give my fair love good-morrow !

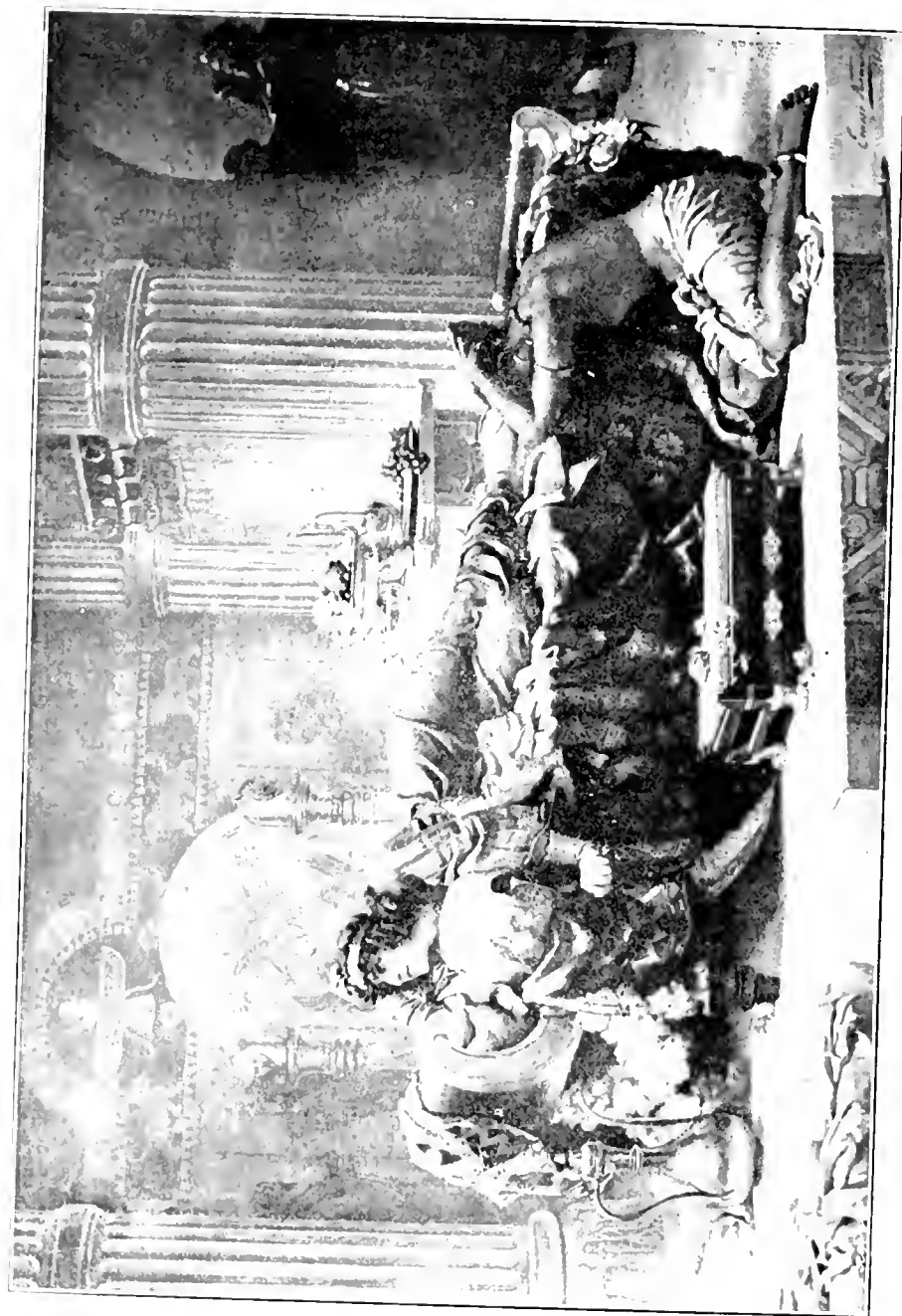
Blackbird and thrush, in every bush,

Stare, linnet and cock-sparrow ;

You pretty elves, among yourselves,

Sing my fair love good-morrow !

THOMAS HAYWOOD.



VASQUE DE LA SÈVE

Fontaine de la Sève

A N OLD SONG.*

CHAPTER I.

THE night was stormy; a wan moon rode through masses of black and gold, swift-sailing cloud, through lakes of clear blue space and threads of opal and silver film, thus producing a wildly beautiful and impressive series of sky-pictures. Now and again the dim wet streets were swept empty and dark by a scud of rain, then as suddenly flooded by clear, pale moonlight, when the wet flags and streaming runnels became a dazzling silver brilliance, making the light from houses and shops appear duller and dimmer than before.

Few people were abroad, so that the lingering steps of a man wrapped in an Inverness cape made echoes to accentuate the silence, otherwise broken by a shout, or tipsy song, or hoarse altercation from a public-house, or the inarticulate yell of a wet and shivering newspaper imp. Nothing escaped this man's observation; names over shops, public-house signs, chapels, and the few private houses; all appeared to interest him; while the splendid pageant of the moving tempestuous sky scarcely drew a glance from his piercing eyes. A dull gleam from the General Post-office attracted his gaze, and drew from him an expression of disfavour, shared by the brand new red-brick Corn Exchange, in the depreciating monosyllable "new." Something appeared to be wrong with the face of the church tower, shining out suddenly in the unclouded moonlight, something amiss with the Town Hall, whence a lighted clock looked dimly down on the moon-silvered mud and on the shining wet capes of two policemen, whose wistful gaze was on the glowing window of a neighbouring bar. The clock struck on a deep bell; at its fifth stroke, the quarter chimes of another rose, silenced it, and declined in easy modulations, tossed and separated by wind-gusts, to

the hour bell, which tolled nine to the accompaniment of various little sharp, self-asserting chimings and strikings of smaller time-pieces.

"Flat," muttered the solitary stroller, pausing in a sheltered corner to light a pipe, but baffled by damp gusts of wind, that shrieked and wailed as they tore fitfully down alleys and round corners and gulleys made by chimney and gable. Then he sauntered on, pipeless and buffeted. The moon rushed into a black mass of silver-edged cloud; the darkened street was deluged by a rush of rain. Holding his soft, wide-brimmed hat on, he quickened his pace in the face of wind and rain, and, as one who treads an accustomed path, turned a corner and came in front of a large building, shapeless and dim in the darkness, but emitting golden light from its high windows and open two-leaved door, whence also issued clear notes of a piano.

Giving himself a dog-like shake, he stepped into the hall, took off his hat, shook the rain from it, put it on again, and turned up the lighted corridor to a small table, at which sat a man taking money.

"What is it?" the new-comer asked in a deep mellow voice.

"Shilling—after nine," the money-taker replied, looking up into a lined face, bearded thickly, shadowed much by the broad-leaved hat, and illumined by eyes of searching intensity, in which lurked a humorous twinkle. The money-taker at once associated the questioner with music, he could not explain to himself why, and yet he told himself there was a suspicion of gentry about the man.

"What is on? Not how much," the man in the Inverness cape corrected. "It is Josiah Whitewood," he added to himself. "Not a day older or more civil."

"Concert," growled Josiah. "Anybody as had ears might know that."

But the deluge of rain rushing on the roofs in ever-growing violence was enough to drown louder and less delicate music than that issu-

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ing brokenly from the hall; the storm seemed to have gathered itself for a final burst, and then died down as suddenly as it had begun, in little melodious trickles and drips, just as the stranger entered the spacious, brilliantly-lighted room, through which rang the pure notes of a soprano, singing, "Bid me discourse."

The melody flooded the wide high hall, in which a numerous audience sat hushed and attentive, gazing spellbound at the singer, upon whom the light was concentrated, and whose figure, in its white and shining satin gown, bordered and garnished with gold, rising above the palms and hot-house plants on the stage, seemed to be the source of all the light, as well as of all the clear and lustrous melody, that filled the building.

"I will enchant thine ear,
Or, like a fairy,
Dance upon the green."

To one coming out of the storm, darkness and chill wet, into the brilliance, warmth and music, and scent of flowers, and seeing the beauty of young faces, with fragrant hair, rose-wreathed, the flash of jewels and brightness of gauzy, silken clothing, the contrast was striking; but to this solitary, storm-driven wanderer, it was something more. A wave of powerful emotion, gathered up as if out of the heart of some tempestuous sea, rushed over his strong, rock-like face, sending a faint quiver through his tall frame. Pushing his hat farther over his forehead, he leant against a pillar, like one staggered by a hard blow and breathless. He closed his eyes and shut out the bright building, the sea of heads, and the graceful figure in shining satin, holding her song in both hands before her, and swaying slightly to bring out the fuller notes.

"Or, like a nymph, with bright and flowing hair," she sang.

Her throat was beautiful and well set; one could see the song throbbing in it as in a bird's, a jewel quivered at its spring in light that seemed alive; she brought out the golden, gurgling triplets of the fairy dance

without any facial distortion, her slightly flushed, unpainted and unpowdered face wore the rapt, happy expression of conscious artistic power; it was as full of music as her voice; her eyes, when raised from the sheet of music, had a level gaze that saw—not the sea of faces in brilliant light, but the nymph with bright, flowing hair, the fairy, the dance, the enchantment, the unbodied things music summons up.

When the spell broke, as the song ended, there was a roar of applause from every part of the hall; the artist, evidently a favourite with her audience and in sympathy with them, smiled gravely, bowed, retired a little way, and advanced at the deepening applause to bow once more, and again retire, handed back by the accompanist, a tall and handsome man. Having reached the back, amid the rising surge of a thunderous recall, she spoke to the pianist, who led her to the front, where she stood, quiet and self-contained, but evidently pleased, while the loud excited plaudits gradually rolled back into stillness like a fallen wave.

The man in the Inverness was, perhaps, alone in giving no applause to the song, every note of which his still, never-wavering attitude and fixed gaze seemed to have absorbed. When the song was done he raised a binocular to his eye, and looked through it so fixedly, that, with the glasses and the picturesque hat and cloak, he seemed like the carved image of a man, silent, motionless, through all the tumult of the noisy crowd. The singer, without notes this time, and lightly holding one end of her long fan in each hand, looked over the mass of uplifted faces with a new expression; it was as if she loved each face she looked on.

"Isn't she a *dear*?" murmured a young woman in front of the stranger, to her sweet-heart, who promptly whispered back, "There's only one dear for me."

The singer's lips parted and softly sang in pure round notes, neutral, till the name brought a subtly, caressing tone, and rising to passion in the last line,—

"What's this dull town to me?
 Robin Adair!
 What was't I wished to see,
 What wished to hear?
 Where's all the joy and mirth,
 Made this town a heaven on earth?
 Oh! they are all fled with thee,
 Robin Adair!"

The first notes struck the stranger like a strong sea wave, making the glasses fall and hang at his side, while hot tears scalded his eyes, unregarded by himself, unnoticed by those around. No doubt he had heard "Robin Adair" before. Who has not? Perhaps he thought of some special occasion on which he had heard it and loved it. Is there a song tenderer, or with a pathos more artless than this old, ever new, favourite, as natural and unpremeditated as the redbreast's? But not every singer can bring out the tenderness and heart-break as did this lady.

"What made the ball so fine?
 Robin Adair.
 What made th' Assembly shine?
 Robin Adair!"—

was sung with gentle wistfulness, "as when a soul laments that hath been blessed with sweetness in the past."

"What, when the play was o'er,
 What made my heart so sore?
 Oh! it was parting with
 Robin Adair!"

Here the simple heart-break rose to a passionate climax. People shed tears unawares; the sweethearts in front of the man in the Inverness pressed closer together with twined arms, unabashed in the crowd, as Adam and Eve in Eden.

Then the soft, sad reproach,

"But now thou'rt cold to me,
 Robin Adair!"

was delivered with rare delicacy, and

"Yet him I loved so well
 Still in my heart shall dwell;
 Oh! I can ne'er forget
 Robin Adair!"

rose to an agony of tenderness that brought a quiver to the singer's own lips, and compelled the homage of a momentary silence, broken by a less noisy, but more profound applause, and followed by the natural irrita-

tion of Britons betrayed into emotion. For some seconds the man in the Inverness remained by his pillar, motionless, with wet eyes; then he looked at the stage, with its swaying back scene of marble and pillared portico, between which gleamed a blue sea with a ship in the offing and a skiff moored by the steps,—with its bower of palms and pot plants in front, its open-winged piano and its music stands. All was in bright light, but empty and deserted; a hard desolation seemed to reign there in the absence of the graceful figure in shining draperies.

It was no dream, all was real, especially the scene-painter's marble portico and sea, very real; but yet, through the comparative silence, scarcely interrupted by subdued hum of voices, rustling of draperies, sound of footsteps and pushed-back chairs, rang the pure golden notes of the beautiful impassioned voice,

"Oh! I can ne'er forget
 Robin Adair!"

All true and real.

He beckoned to a boy with programmes and took one, keeping his place while people surged round him, some going out in the ten minutes' interval, some seeking friends and chatting.

"The celebrated soprano, Miss Ruby Elliott" he read. Every one had heard of, if not actually heard, Ruby Elliott, yet this man with music in his face seemed new to the spell of her singing. "Miss," he pondered. Singers do



IN A SHELTERED CORNER.

not readily part with a name that has won recognition. The handsome pianist might still be her husband "Mr. Ralph Somers," a known, but not a first-class name. The concert was in aid of local charities, patronised by a long list of town and county worthies, amongst them the Rev. Dr. Ashworth, vicar. The sight of this name was as steel to the stone of the man's face; it flashed fire. Taking his opera glasses again, he raked the dress circle. In front, quite near the stage, was a white-headed clergyman, grave, dignified, even stern; he turned at the moment, his profile traced sharp and clear on the crimson draperies below the stage; he seemed to be speaking to a lady near him. At the sight of the old clergyman the stranger quivered again the glasses once more dropped by his side, to be again raised and intently gazed through. A light treble laugh rose from behind the scenes, accompanied by a cheerful pop, suggestive of champagne, an opening door let out confused murmur of voices, clinking of glass and china, and sudden chime of chorused laughter, dulled by the closing of the door and dying down to quiet again. The sweethearts were absorbed in each other; the young carpenter, square, ruddy, and clean, gazed upon the homely face of the girl beside him with a sort of sacred rapture; their words floated up to the man standing behind them, holding the glasses above their heads.

"Isn't Miss Elliott beautiful?" the girl whispered.

"Beautiful? Hum! Easy to look nice in white satin, and gold and jools, Fanny. The beauty for me is when anybody looks pretty first thing in the morning, in a print gown tucked up, and bare arms, sweeping out of a front door. Ah! my dear, and looking out for *somebody* as comes round the corner and gives her —"

"Go on, you great stupid! And nice and silly we looked, with the boy bringing the breakfast rolls and grinning!"

"I'll grin him, next time I catches him! Fine feathers make fine birds, Fan. Miss

Ruby Elliott can't be so young as she looks."

"She was a woman grown when mother lived parlourmaid at Ashworth's, George."

"Before you were born or thought of. She 've kept well. Singing is like salt, Fan. She lived with Ashworths, didn't she?"

"No, she lived long with her uncle, old Mr. Forde, the lawyer. Her real name's Forde Beatrice Forde. Ruby Elliott is only her singing name. Mother 's heard her sing many a time at Ashworth's. There was a pupil there, used to make up to her. Him over there by Dr. Ashworth.

"Mr. Vereker, that old parson?"

"He wasn't much of a parson then, mother says. Always up to something, him and young Mr. Ashworth together. That's Mrs. and Miss Vereker along side of him. Mother couldn't abear him. Poor Mr. Robin was different; no harm in him. Miss Vereker's pretty in the pink——"

"Not my style, Fan. What would she be in a cap and apron?"

A burst of applause surged out; people had rustled back to their places; the glee singers were forming a group on the stage, the star amongst them. The programme showed the chief burthen of the evening to be sustained by her. "She does it all for love," Fanny explained to her carpenter, "and for the sake of old times."

The tenor was local. He cracked slightly on the high notes, besides going a little flat at the end of the evening; the contralto was an amateur with a noble, untrained voice; the glee singers were amateur. The 'cello player was *welt-beruhmt*, German and unpronounceable. The audience scarcely knew that in the stringed quartette his instrument had the chief part, much less that few but he could so render it. As for his obligato to Ruby Elliott's singing of "Batti, batti," they scarcely heard it, yet it was like the flow of a strong, calm river, down which the fine soprano voice floated with steady ease like a full-sailed ship.

The solitary man below the gallery, absorbed though he was in the sunny splen-

dour of the melody, involuntarily made the motions of one playing the 'cello accompaniment. But even he was less moved by that great and difficult melody, magnificently sung and magnificently accompanied, than by the simple and touching beauty of "Robin Adair," or the pure and artless tunefulness of "Those Evening Bells," sung as an encore, and which made people's eyes wet again. For the audience knew the singer was thinking of their own church bells, which she and they had heard in youth, on sunny summer evenings in the fields near their own little town.

The numerous recalls and the hearty, indiscriminate applause, made it late before the programme was finished; people were impatient for their carriages and wraps. The exit was a small crush, through which the young carpenter gallantly and quickly piloted Fanny, and the man in the Inverness cape more quickly slipped himself, reaching the carriage entrance in time to hear the first name called, and so placing himself in heavy shadow as to see every face in the full gas-light reaching to the kerb.

"It is curious," the tenor, who was standing near the door within, was saying, "her voice came to her all at once. She sang at a Penny Reading here one Christmas. None of us thought much of it; nice, fresh, fluty notes, but she couldn't get at them, and no expression. Then, soon after New Year, she sang at a village concert near here and electrified us all. You wouldn't have thought it was the same girl. People said it was trouble brought out her voice. I've heard of song birds blinded to make them sing. She left the place soon after."

Carriages rolled up, filled, and rolled away. The man in the cape stood in the shadow, where he could hear what the tenor said, and waited patiently.

"Dr. Ashworth's carriage!" was called, and the old vicar stepped out of the hall and handed a middle-aged lady and a young girl into a venerable vehicle driven by a man out of livery.

"Dr. Westland's carriage!" was the next

called. The stranger, deeply interested in the preceding carriage, glanced but carelessly at this, which took up two ladies, a gentleman, and a little girl, until one of the ladies, closely muffled round the face, and gathering white satin skirts about her, turned her head, bowed slightly to someone within the building behind her, and said "Good night" in a clear and rather high voice. Then the stranger quickly advanced, opened the carriage door,



RUBY ELLIOTT.

and held it while the ladies and the child stepped in, so that their skirts brushed him and he felt the softness of satin on his ungloved hand. They did not observe him; but he watched the carriage roll out of sight so intently and with such forgetfulness that a policeman ordered him to move on. He moved on, asking the next policeman he met the way to Dr. Westland's house, whither he betook himself, and which he examined with much interest, slowly pacing the wet pavement opposite and thinking of many things.

Were those things sorrowful or joyful, sweet or bitter? Oh! rosemary, rosemary, bitter-sweet, wholesome herb, you always bring tears, "idle tears, from the depths of divine despair," whether recalling bliss or

woe, sunshine or tempest. Your fragrance is the scent of unforgotten youth, which was sweet and is bitter in retrospect; which was fresher than May dew and is now old, old as a mossed, illegible tombstone; which was sad and is now sweet, sweet as pressed rose leaves; which was despairing, and is now, seen in the hot, arid meridian of life, glorious with auroral hues of hope. Grow not in my garden, tear-watered, melancholy herb; rather let some tributary of Lethe flow stilly round the flower plots, some dreaming lotos plant float on its fountain's brim! I cannot tell what the magic herb brought to the lonely man's mind; it breaks my heart only to think of him, pacing the wet flags in darkness, in sight of the lighted house, not quite alone, since he was face to face with his past.

CHAPTER II.

"Well, now," Dr. Westland was saying in the warmth and light within the house, "singing is good for lungs, and digestion, too; so my dear Ruby, you are expected to be hungry."

"I am hungry, Arthur; but I would rather not *begin* with a whole partridge, thank you. Oh, no! it isn't so very good of me to sing so much and take so many encores. I delight in singing here—at home—and I delight in the applause, desperately unjust applause, I know. I was really vexed that Von Strumpschen was so absolutely ignored."

"Oh! old Von Strumpschen wouldn't care for such an audience."

"Wouldn't he, though! Nobody cares to play to a stolid audience. It's so cramping."

There was a pre-occupied expression on Ruby's face. Her hearing was acute, even morbidly so. It seemed to her that slow solitary footsteps on the pavement kept time to the conversation.

"Well, dear, your reception agreed with you. I never heard you sing better than to-night," Mrs. Westland struck in.

"Gratified vanity, Emmy," Westland ex-

plained, "You certainly were in first-rate form, though, Ruby."

"It was not vanity; it was affection and 'Auld Lang Syne,' and all sorts of fine feelings that nobody in this house gives me credit for—and yet," she added, after a pause and a long sigh, "it's very sad."

"Sad? Why?"

"Rosemary—for remembrance, and that's sadness. Many things to-night called back old times."

"That tenor's singing of 'Ruby,' for instance," said Mrs. Westland, acidly,

"Oh! Ruby, my darling, the small white hand, That gathered the harebell was never my own,"

she sang with exaggeration and gesture, while her husband coloured darkly and burst into an awkward laugh.

"I wasn't the only one that used to sing it, Em," he apologised.

"Dear me, Arthur, you don't mean to say that *you* ever sang that wonderful song?" his wife returned with a face of innocent wonder, "I was very young at the time, dear. I was told that Ruby got the name from the ditty sung by her numerous swains."

"Yet I was not consumptive, and I certainly didn't die. I think I took the name myself," the singer explained with a faint flush. "How that horrid Jim Vereker used to mouth the song at me!"

"And you did read Tasso, and gather harebells, and *had* a small white hand," Westland added, glancing at that resting on the shoulder of his little daughter, who had begged to sit up to supper, and had fallen asleep, nestled to Cousin Beatrice's side.

"Upon my word!" began Mrs. Westland, with indignation.

"All this was before you were born or thought of, my dear," her husband explained. "Ruby was an awful flirt in those days; who knows how many a poor lad may have gone wrong through her?"

"Not that Vereker, certainly. He must have been born wrong. Perhaps I turned him comparatively right—who knows? He's

a *Canon* now," Ruby added, with a singular smile.

"His poor wife!" Mrs. Westland and Beatrice ejaculated simultaneously; a simple phrase, but impressive.

"Oh! come! poor old Vereker is all right now," Westland interposed, "and he was never as bad as *all that*. Strange to see him there to-night as large as life, looking as respectable as an owl, with young Thacker howling 'Ruby' half a tone flat."

"As that Vereker *always* did," interjected Ruby.

"His girl is growing into a nice little thing. Well! there was one swain who sang 'Ruby' in tune—poor Bob Ashworth."

A faint, very faint, tremor passed over the singer's face; she looked steadily into a bowl of chrysanthemums before her. "Yes," she assented, "his voice and ear were true."

"Poor chap! We were awfully sorry for him. I never could understand how he came to do for himself to that extent."

"Oh! it was all that Vereker! The other was only a scapegoat," Beatrice cried in a half-stifled voice.

"How like a woman to be so unjust! It wasn't *all* Vereker, Ruby. It was just this; Vereker was older. He had a knack of never being found out. He'd been through a public school and Robin had never stirred from the vicarage. Vereker led Ashworth, one of the most unlucky fellows upon the earth, into scrapes——"

"And sneaked out himself and left Robin to take the consequences," Ruby said, her eyes flashing. "Robin was loyal and guileless; Vereker, a liar and a sneak. One was a man of honour and a gentleman, the other a coward and a cur."

"And a canon," Westland added softly with an affectionate smile. "Ah! Ruby, what should we poor men do, if women didn't side with the weak and unlucky?"

"What *did* Bob Ashworth do?" Mrs. Westland asked. "I have a dim remembrance of something whispered about and we children being told not to ask questions."

"Oh! that's an old scandal," her husband replied; "I was not at home at the time. I was at Guy's. I went up that October. I'd been reading with old Ashworth."

"Oh!" said Beatrice, "it was a sad, sad story! He was tempted and—trapped. His father was so injudicious and so harsh. Fancy allowing a man, a grown man, no pocket money! It was intolerable. Poor old man! He has suffered sadly—yet justly. But, oh! it was bitter—bitter for the boy!" The mellow voice failed, there came a long, long sigh.



THEY SAT AND TALKED.

"It *was* intolerable," Westland assented in the same gentle tone, with the same half reverent and half compassionate glance he had bent upon the singer's moved, sweet face, on which the years had written nothing that was not noble. "Old Ashworth never realised that Robin was anything but a child. Clarence went to Marlborough and Sandhurst, Wilfred to Winchester and Oxford; but when Robin left the Grammar School he was kept at home with his father's pupils—forgotten, as it were."

"His father wished him to be a clergyman," Beatrice added.

"So he artiled him to a solicitor. 'Promise to be a parson, and you go to Oxford,' was the old man's catchword. 'Not I,' was Robin's. 'I fancy that was the staple of their conversation for years. Then the doctor used to pray at him in family prayers, and make him go to perpetual missionary meetings and Sunday schools. As for old Aunt Berry, she was a poor substitute for a mother; every peccadillo of Robin's was exaggerated and carried to his father, instead of being smoothed over and hidden. Vereker used to talk to the doctor about his soul, and whatever devilry he was about in the week, he always turned up in 'a top hat at church on Sunday. Robin refused to discuss his soul; he said it was indelicate. He often missed church, and never remembered the sermon. Vereker was free, providing he came in at eleven at night, and spent his time as he pleased. Robin, going daily to work at Jackson Forde's office, was treated as a schoolboy. He and Vereker used to play billiards at the Red Dragon, but Ashworth went against his father's will, and with no money. Only one thing could come of this."

"Uncle Jackson used to think the father and son actually hated each other," Beatrice said.

"But really Robin was the favourite son. His mother died at his birth. Wilfred and Clarence did as others did; they were not saints. Their up-bringing was considered a failure. Robin was to be perfect. Everybody liked Bob Ashworth. Not even his grim father could quench his high spirits, though his jokes were not always original or witty. Oh! Ruby, do you remember the black bishop?"

"I never quite got at the rights of it. Some harmless joke, wasn't it?"

"Let us hear about the black bishop," Mrs. Westland said. "You can smoke, if you like, Arthur."

CHAPTER III.

"It was when Vereker first came, and about a year before Ashworth was artiled to your uncle," Westland began, when he had

set his cigar going. "I wasn't in it. A real nigger bishop was to stay at the vicarage, and carry on a regular missionary campaign. It involved correspondence. 'Do it between you, lads,' the doctor said blandly one morning, leaving us a pile of circulars to address. I sulked. Vereker was gracious, Robin glum. But as soon as the doctor had left the study, Vereker swore he would see everybody exactly where the doctor wished them not to go, before he would bother over the silly things. My observations were not exactly pious, but it was, as usual, the unlucky Robin who was caught by the doctor coming back with an after-thought. 'Bother the nigger!' Robin was complaining, 'white bishops are nuisance enough. I wish to goodness he'd convert the governor and take him off to Timbuctoo to shew about at nigger meetings, and let us have a little peace.' Ashworth was still at Coventry for this expression on the day the bishop was expected. A curate and a churchwarden were invited to meet him. He was to arrive at seven and dine at half-past. Rob and I were to dine alone together in the study. We were in the drawing-room—all but Robin. Aunt Berry was on the sofa in state with the churchwarden at her side; the doctor on the hearth-rug, his hands under his coat tails, talking to the curate; Vereker, with a book of engravings at a side table, drawing caricatures of Aunt Berry and the doctor; I, a little behind him, wishing the dinner-bell would ring, and planning a quiet read after dinner. It was a stormy October night, curtains drawn, lamps lit, bright little fire burning. The door bell rang; the doctor, thinking it was the bishop, left the room to receive him in the hall. I heard the two voices just outside the door, the bishop's a little nasal and high pitched. He would rather come to the drawing-room at once, was not wet, having driven from the station. So the doctor, beaming and gracious, brought in the honoured guest and solemnly introduced the Bishop of Nigritia to 'my sister, Miss Ashworth,' who was delighted and honoured to make the personal acquaint-

ance of one so deeply revered, whose labours in the vineyard had so greatly edified the Christian world. Then the curate was presented to the bishop, then the churchwarden, Vereker, and myself. We had all risen at the bishop's entrance, and looked at him with quite as much curiosity as was decent. His costume was correct, gaiters, apron and all, but of a marvellously bad fit; Vereker suggested to me that he had grown lean owing to long abstinence from cold roast missionary. He had an intelligent, grave face, with well-formed European features, large, soft eyes, grizzled wool, and plenty of it; he was about the Doctor's height, we observed, as he stood beside him on the hearth-rug—indeed, he was not unlike a black replica of the doctor, though rather wide in the waist; his manner was dignified and commanding, yet suave; he had more gesture than one expects in an English bishop, and a foreign accent, yet a ready flow of speech. He lamented the coldness of English congregations and the sad lack of enthusiasm and resulting pence at the last missionary meeting over which he had presided, and told one or two delightful anecdotes of converted native chiefs, and enquired tenderly for the date of the curate's conversion. He praised missionary zeal (measured by subscriptions) in the doctor's parish. At the doctor's desire he related the detailed circumstances that had resulted in the conversion and baptism of a whole African tribe at his preaching. He suffered the doctor to question and draw him out, and explain him to the company with the amiable readiness of a celebrity in the hands of an interviewer. The accounts of the persecutions he had suffered from his tribe in consequence of his conversion were under- rather than over-stated, he said. He had been roasted over a slow fire, he rejoiced to say; in fact he had almost been done brown. The doctor looked somewhat bewildered at this expression, but Aunt Berry and the churchwarden were quite overcome by the bishop's wit, and laughed as ecstatically as if they were at a religious meeting, and the doctor finally joined in. The bishop

seemed pained by their levity. 'I did deserve dis roast,' he added sadly, 'for I was de most bad man, de biggest sinner in all dis world.' He paused, overcome by emotion, and put his handkerchief to his face, his shoulders heaving. 'Alas!' he added, subduing his feelings with difficulty, 'it was too sad. I did eat my fellow men and'—with a deep sigh—'dey did not always agree with me.'

"A sort of delighted horror sat on Aunt Berry's countenance at this revelation; the churchwarden ejaculated in a tone that combined reprobation with approval; the curate—it was that dear little chap, Kendal, Ruby, you remember him, he worshipped at your shrine—being consumptive and gentle-hearted, looked as if he were half-way between Dover and Calais on a choppy sea; the doctor stared; Vereker was so much overcome that, putting his handkerchief to his face, he jumped up and went and sat in a dimly-lighted corner of the conservatory adjoining the room, where I heard him gurgling and choking. 'Beastly cad,' I thought, 'he's putting it on.' But he wasn't.

"The bishop sighed profoundly and looked round the room in the deep silence with a sort of gratified sadness. 'From dis,' he continued, 'I would save my black bruders; from dis and oder bad sings. My young bruder Kendal is shocked by the badness of dis nigger, what den would he sink, did he know dose more bad sings, I must not tell in dis pious priest-house?'

"All, led by the doctor, joined in confused deprecatory murmurs, mingled with expressions of joy at the bishop's conversion, though I thought the doctor still seemed to share the sort of creepiness I felt at the sight of a live nigger who had actually eaten long pork. Vereker stole in from the conservatory and kindly offered Kendal Aunt Berry's smelling bottle, which the little chap haughtily declined, and just at this moment, everybody talking at once to the centre of interest, on whom every eye was fixed, the door opened and the parlourmaid announced, gaspingly,

"The Bishop of Nigritia!"

"My dear Emmie, I never saw people look so flabbergasted in my life, when, in the sudden silence produced by this astounding announcement, a genuine, shiny-faced nigger, with a squab nose, an immense red nether lip, and a benign expression, walked in, and began, with courteous self-possession, and in correct English, to apologise for his late arrival, addressing himself to Aunt Berry, and then looking round for his host, when, of course, he saw the other black bishop. Then his eyes rolled till we saw nothing but the whites, and he lifted up his black hands, which were pink inside, and became speechless. The other bishop was speechless; everybody was speechless; Vereker was black in the face with suppressed laughter; the doctor looked lividly pale with wrath. Aunt Berry gasped, the churchwarden and the curate stood open-mouthed for at least a minute, when the sham bishop, quickly extinguishing the lamp nearest him and signing to me and Vereker to put out the other, dashed across the room to the south window, which, you remember, is opposite the door, and made a clean bolt through it, smashing a pane of glass in his haste, and leaving his grizzled wool behind him on the carpet; it was Vereker's wool, he wore it when playing the banjo.

"I don't quite remember what followed, but I shall never forget the next morning in the study. Vereker and I were first summoned. The sight of that old man's face and his blazing eyes gave me gooseflesh all over. I weakly said something about Robin's 'not meaning anything,' and his father raved at me. That sneak Vereker deplored Robin's flippancy and profanity, and the doctor—to my great joy—fell foul of him. I hoped he would knock him down, but Jim discreetly vanished before he had time to. I was ordered out of the room, and Robin called in. Bob was really sorry and ashamed. He told me that he never meant to go so far, but was carried away by the unexpected success of his make-up. 'I didn't think I could have worked such a sell

on the governor,' he said, 'and I was certain you fellows would know me. It was Aunt Berry's opening speech that did it. Having got such a rise out of the old girl, I was bound to go on. You all played up to me to that extent, I firmly believed I was the bishop before the end. I shall never forget little Kendal's face when I confessed the long pork.'"

"What could have put such an unlucky thing into his head?" Ruby wondered.

"The bishop had telegraphed that he was coming by a later train than that first decided on. He had sent a portmanteau on by a morning train; the portmanteau had come unfastened on the way, and the housemaid, seeing the things had got wet, had taken them out and dried and arranged them by the spare bedroom fire. The telegram had been given to Robin, his father not being at home, whereupon the idea entered into him and he planned this unlucky trick.

"The study door was shut upon those two for a long time that morning; we heard loud, angry voices from within, and at last a struggle; then the door burst open and Robin came out, pale and wild with anger. He took his hat from the stand, opened the hall door and went out. The doctor followed him and asked where he was going.

"To the dogs,' he replied, turning with eyes like two live coals, 'since you wish it.'"

"Stop!" thundered his father, whose face was as the face of a demon, or that of John Knox preaching before Mary Queen of Scots, 'or never return.'

"But Ashworth walked on, his hat set over his eyes, his head bent down, his hands in his pockets. He was in one of his black rages, and Vereker and I both knew better than to interfere with him till he had quieted down. Nothing was heard of him for three mortal months, at the end of which I had a short letter from a hospital. 'Come and see me; I'm all broken up and done for.' And of course I went—ah!"

A long, loud peal at the night-bell roused

the quiet house and broke up the little circle. Even then Beatrice could not quite lose the sound of steps pacing on the flags opposite.

CHAPTER IV.

The night was bright with moonshine, but the wind roared and rioted round the house till it shuddered as if in a giant's grasp. When the hours were small, Mrs. Westland, wrapped in a dressing gown, and sitting by the fire with a novel in her hand, looked up to see Beatrice enter the room in like array.

"I can't sleep, Emmie: may I keep you company?" she asked, and they sat and talked brokenly in the lull of the storm.

"It's no use to be jealous," Emmie presently said, "but Arthur worships you still. Why wouldn't you have him?"

"Dear Emmie, I didn't want him. And I don't think he really wanted me. He is perfectly happy as it is. He couldn't have a better wife."

"Of course not, but they always want what they can't get."

"Until they get it. What a true friend Arthur was to Robin Ashworth. I shall always love your husband for that, Emmie. He it was who made peace between father and son, and put fresh life into that poor fellow, who was sinking from despair. But there were many embassies before terms were obtained that made it possible for Robin to go home and begin again."

"But where had he been?"

"He never would say; silence on that point was one of his stipulations. He had done no wrong, he said; that he had

suffered was evident. About that time he was much at my uncle's house. Uncle Jackson and I were both so sorry for him. He used to sing, I accompanied him on the piano. He played the 'cello a little by ear; he had never learnt music. My aunt made him welcome, and Miss Ashworth and the doctor always had a weak spot in their iron hearts for me, so that there was perpetual coming and going between our two houses."

"In plain English, they all fell in love with you, the doctor and all, and you flirted shamefully. The coal-scuttle is nearest to you, put on more coal, Ruby."

"Well!" returned Beatrice, as she carefully built up a bright fire, "I daresay I may have carried on with some of them. Did you never carry on in the days of your youth? Your sister was one of the set of quite young people so much at my uncle's then. She was distinctly the belle of our set. But one thing I swear: I never gave that Vereker the *slightest* encouragement."

"Of course you gave poor dear Arthur no encouragement either."

"I liked Arthur; he was such a loyal, reliable fellow; but I think he always understood."

"Or Robin Ashworth?"

"Poor Robin! What a man he might have been if he had but had a chance; everything was against him."

"So Arthur says. He hated the law; I suppose that made him wild."

"Ah! but he was only too thankful to have a chance of any profession but the church. He did very well in the office; my uncles thought him quite a promising pupil.



"I WAS HAPPY, HAPPY!"

AN OLD SONG.

He must have got into serious scrapes during that idle time, and it was not easy to get out of them, I suppose. I wonder why things come back so vividly at times, Em? To-night, now, things long-forgotten rise up little trivial things connected with those old, sweet, sweet, sad days —"

Her voice broke; she rose and paced the room; the young matron by the fire looked at her with astonishment, and saw that she was crying.

"Ruby!" she exclaimed, "you? you who have no care, no trouble? Successful, rich, loved and admired, so devoted to the art——"

"Art!" echoed Ruby, wringing her hands together and flinging them apart again: "Oh! Emmie!" she cried, turning, sinking on her knees by her friend's side and allowing herself to be folded in her arms, "Emmie!"

The other rocked slightly, as if hushing one of her babies. "Poor dear!" she murmured, stroking the drooped head. "Ah!" she thought to herself, "she cared for Arthur, after all."

Presently Ruby raised her head with a change of manner and a curious little laugh. "I feel that I *must* tell it all at times," she said, "I'm like the Ancient Mariner."

"Do, darling, tell me all about it."

Then Ruby rose and re-seated herself in her usual manner, holding an open fan to screen her face from the bright fire, and waited for an angry wind-gust to die away.

"He was only twenty," she began, "but he looked older, that sad time had aged him, and despite his dashing, devil-may-care manner and open face, one saw that something was weighing upon him—it was as if he had been trapped, and was always trying to get free—perhaps even this may have had a charm for me; but he was in reality very charming; everyone acknowledged his charm. He was tall and slim, with good features, and really beautiful eyes, laughing eyes.

"I knew that he cared for me; he never said so, but he never concealed it—yet he was capricious, often so distant and cold; then I

was piqued—I was barely nineteen, and much cruder than girls are in these days, and—oh! Emmie, I was desperately in love——"

"Poor darling!" murmured the young wife, a little puzzled by this description of her husband, "girls should never be in love, but it's good for singing, I suppose."

"It is very terrible to be in love like that—where there is such—sorrow—such, ah! failure. One does not get over that, you see, and it means life-long loneliness, life-long grief. What does it mean in the life to come, Emmie? Does it mean anything at all, after all?—But for the tangle of falsehood round him, I might have saved him. Had I once suspected what it was that haunted him, why he wore the hunted, trapped look, oh! Emmie, I might have saved him, I might have saved him. No, I won't cry; what are tears in grief like this? I seem happy, do I? Well; one has to live one's life. It is only at times that it rises up again, the pity of it, the unutterable pity! Well! his story is a common one: I mean the temptation and the fall. Others do worse, infinitely worse, yet rise again to better things. That hard, sour Aunt Berry was not one to confide in. 'Fancy her heaven and the governor's,' Robin said one day, when I scolded him about neglecting some religious observance, 'I'd rather go to the other place, where one would at least have the comfort of thinking one's friends were better off than oneself.' Poor fellow!"

"Well, there was good ice that cold winter. One day some of our set walked to a lake a mile-and-a-half distant—but you know the lake; perhaps you were there, a child, on that very day, that sweet, sad, terrible day. All was perfect; still, bright weather, sunshine and wine-like air, so exhilarating and sweet. Tall pines, standing dark against blue sky, and presently darker against the orange, red, and green of a divine sunset, and then, above the tree tops, the white evening star. And one was young; young and fresh and happy; one didn't know what trouble meant, much less sin and shame.

Vain, too, one was, and much admired. I wore a blue gown, fitting closely to the figure, and a small velvet hat, and threw my furs aside to skate. Robin put on my skates; we skated a good deal together hand-in-hand. It was divine. I heard people say, 'What a handsome couple!' as we passed them. His eyes were full of fire, the clear red was in his face, and I looked up and saw — what I knew before — that he loved me. We flew together round and round that lake. Presently, when the sun was dropping behind the pines, we sat on the bank and looked on. Suddenly Robin exclaimed, 'That beastly ead, Vereker!' — Vereker had knocked down some boys on a slide, skating through them, spoiling their slide and leaving them howling. 'I beg your pardon, Miss Forde,' he added. 'Why do you beg my pardon?' I asked, 'He *is* a ead, and I wish I was big enough to knock *him* down.' Then somehow it came out that he supposed me to be engaged to Vereker — imagine my indignation! — and that Vereker was his authority for this. And in the surprise of finding me free, his feelings came out, and, I suppose, mine too. And — well, it was heaven. We skated no more, but wandered in the wood.

"Then he blamed himself for his selfishness and presumption; he was so utterly unworthy, had been a bad fellow, a scamp. I did not know how low he had fallen. Had he ever thought I could have cared for him, he would have been different; even now he hoped to mend and live better, and become perhaps a decent fellow for my sake. But I was not to be bound to him, only to let him hope that he might win me; hope would make a man of him. Poor boy! He looked so manly, so winning; his voice was deep and so musical. Oh, Emmie, I was happy, happy. But it was too late. One short month earlier would have made all the difference. In the midst of all this happiness and poetry, we somehow found ourselves at home; a full moon had risen in the meantime and shone the darkness of real night away.

Oh! I can see Robin now, springing lightly up the steps at my uncle's, and opening the door for me with a sort of tender pride in me. I passed in, looking up into his beautiful eyes: how full of happiness they were, poor fellow. Only think! his sister married and left home when he was but a baby; I was the first woman who had ever really cared for him. He came in and shut the door. We stood by a table in the hall talking. Then, when least expected, the bolt fell.

"The hall was brightly lighted; he laid my skates and his own on the table, and was turning to me with some tender jest, when Uncle Jackson came out of the library with that in his face that made my heart sick. 'Is that you, Ashworth?' he said, in a hard, harsh voice, 'Step this way, will you?'

"Robin looked once at me. Oh! my dear, the agony and despair in those poor, beautiful eyes — the expression of a dumb, hunted creature! He turned white, so white I thought he was going to fall; but he followed my grim uncle into the library. The door closed upon him; I never saw him again. I stood dumb and still with unspeakable horror, alone in the centre of the hall. The skates lay there, as he left them, for weeks.

"When he entered the library, where Uncle Roger and others sat, he was asked to turn out his pockets; he did so, they contained marked coin, easily identified. My uncles promised not to prosecute. My uncles acted unmercifully. I would not live with them afterwards. They stipulated, a cruel and wicked stipulation, that he should leave the place. He left that night. He has never been heard of since."

"Oh! Ruby, dear Ruby; I never guessed this. But to leave you without a word!"

"No; not without a word. Next morning I had a letter with a local postmark. I was to forget him, and be happy, he said, he ought not to have spoken, irretrievably disgraced as he was, but his feelings carried him away. The memory of that afternoon would save him from despair, and help him

to lead a clean life. This town would know him no more. Nothing could excuse him; but perhaps I did not know what it was for a man in his position to be entirely without money. He had borrowed and bet and played in the hope of being able to repay, which was a short cut to a bottomless pit. Then he had done worse, still buoyed up by that false hope of luck. After that he had stolen down to the quay at night and helped unload ships coming in with the tide, he had blacked his face and sung in public-houses to be able to replace what was taken, and sold the watch he had pretended to lose. As for asking his father, 'Well, you know there is no mercy in that quarter.' The letter ended with a good-bye that broke my heart.

"Emmie, I went straight to his father with that letter; I went in hot indignation. 'This is your work!' I cried to his face. I don't know what I said; I was mad with the misery and pity of it, and I was only nineteen. I called him a pharisee, and a sin-worshipper, and told him the ruin of that young life lay at his door. And he—instead of cursing me—he said no word till I had spent my wrath and saw that he was shedding slow and bitter tears; then he replied that I could not reproach him as bitterly as he reproached himself. And yet, he added, 'God knows that I loved the lad the best of them all.' At that I burst out crying, and threw my arms round his neck and kissed him—I suppose nobody had kissed his hard old face for years. That is the secret of our great friendship, our common love and sorrow, and his gratitude to me for abusing him. And he has been another and gentler man since. And in all his seeking and hoping for Robin, he tells me that he is quite, quite sure he shall see him once more before he dies. I am not so hopeful; but I never sing in public without thinking that my poor Robin may be one of the audience. Something tells me he is still alive, that he cannot die without my knowing it, and—Oh! Emmie, your husband at the door! I must fly."

All through her dreams, Emmie, like the man who paced the pavement opposite till the Westland's lights were out, heard the clear voice singing:—

"Oh! I can ne'er forget
Robin Adair!"

The wind had fallen when they woke on the Sunday morning; the autumn sunshine was hot, even sultry, clouded over in the still afternoon in breathless heat, and breaking out luridly at sunset against the edge of coppery-purple storm clouds, rolling up against the wind. Beatrice went in the afternoon to the vicarage, where she poured out his tea for Dr. Ashworth, and walked down to the church with him, leaving him at the vestry door, and joining the Westlands on their way to church.

The organ was rolling out storms of magnificent music as they entered; they recognised a finer, surer touch, and deeper feeling than that of the official organist—who was often persuaded to let others play for him—and forgot the oppression of the sultry, starless night. The vicar was vexed at the length of the voluntary, and darted a severe look towards the organ gallery at the west end, where the organist could see chancel, choir, and pulpit in a mirror. Then the music died down on a minor note, and a young curate intoned, "I will arise and go to my father," and, being only in deacon's orders, waited after the confession, while the vicar rose in the choir and turned, silver-haired, venerable, in his white surplice and scarlet doctor's hood, to pronounce the absolution and remission of the people's sins.

The church was spacious and lofty, the pulpit was placed high just outside the chancel, so that the vicar's passage down the choir and up the pulpit steps occupied some seconds, and was accompanied by a grave, yet exultant, organ strain.

The lights all over the church were lowered, because of the oppressive heat, through which the boom of advancing

thunder rolled and sheet lightning flashed. The sermon was not far advanced when there followed such a hissing, roaring down-rush of rain on the echoing roofs that the preacher's resonant voice was drowned, and he was obliged to stop. It was very awesome to the Westland's children, looking up in the dim light, to see the silent throng of worshippers and the silenced priest, and hear the roar of the great tempest in the outer darkness. Then, above rush of rain and sullen growl of thunder, came a sound the like whereof had not been heard in that church before—a peal of eight bells, ringing clear and regular as if for a wedding; a second peal, hurried and confused; then the clash and clang of all the eight bells in the tower together.

Before the startled people, looking up, white and wild-eyed, could realise that the familiar church bells were sounding untouched by mortal hand, there cracked and crashed such a peal of thunder as seemed to rend and rive the roofs asunder, and topple down the tower, a sound that swallowed up the startled cries of women and children, and the continuous chiming and clashing of bells. When that terrific and complicated noise of elemental war had grown faint enough to let the clanging bells be heard again, the church was permeated by a sulphurous smell, a puff of smoke rolled from a gallery at the west end, there was a shrill, agonised shriek of "Fire!" followed by the sudden extinction of every light in the church.

"The tower is struck, and they've turned off the gas at the main," said Westland, who, with his wife and two children and Beatrice, sat in the nave a little below the chancel. "Keep steady and firm in the rush. Hold the girl standing on the seat. I'll hold the boy."

Then followed a scene beyond imagining; the building that a moment before had resounded with psalmody, measured, solemn, swelled by hundreds of reverent voices, and borne upon billows of rolling organ music, that had echoed the out-poured prayer and praise of the worshipping multitude, words of

prophet and evangelist, and the well-known voice of the preacher, was filled with sounds of terror and wrath, anguish and despair; shrieks of frightened, trampled women and children; threats and execrations of maddened men, trying here to free a passage, there to stem the on-rush of the congested crowd, that prevented the inward opening of doors, round which raged a fierce fight in the dark; calling of parent to child, child to parent, friend to friend; cracking of wood-work where people forced pew doors and climbed hither and thither; groans and cries of pain; shattering of glass where a window was climbed and forced; and ever, through the thick, heavy dark, terribly invaded at moments by blinding flashes of lightning, the weird unearthly clashing of the church bells, the hissing and drumming of rain on the roofs, the sullen fierce growl, the low distant rumble, or loud crash and roar, of savage thunder.

There were, however, two tiny isles of light left in the gloom, the pulpit candles illuminating the grey old priest in his white surplice dashed with scarlet, and those at the organ, showing the white-robed organist, who, like the priest, beckoned to the people. They were not seen in the tumult and agony, until in a lull of the storm a deep, full voice, calling, "Keep your places! Be men!" attracted many eyes to the little light by the organ, and a fainter echo in a similar voice, "Be Christians! Be still!" showed the face of the vicar, and recalled some feelings of reverence and duty. Then ensued a faint lull, through



"I STOOD DUMB."

which a powerful baritone voice arose, singing the hymn that not long since had died into the solemn hush of prayer:—

“Oh, God, our help in ages past,”

this was joined, half through the line, by the clear notes of Ruby Elliott’s trained soprano.

“Our hope for years to come!”

pealed out among the echoing roofs in the two blended voices, piercing and drowning the pandemonium of human and elemental tumult: recalling the frantic people to discipline, order, and worship, as a bugle call sounded by a gallant child has been known to rally a scattered, demoralised regiment. The crowd paused like a curbed horse: there was a steady, backward surge, freeing the congestion, delivering the trampled, and permitting the opening of doors, while the choir took up their several parts, and were joined by an ever increasing volume of voices singing in unison:—

“Our refuge from the stormy blast

And our eternal home,”

to the grand swing of which, helped now by the boom of the organ, the calmed and reassured congregation moved slowly and orderly, in religious awe and exultation, with uplifted hearts.

An appalling catastrophe was thus averted, and in ten minutes the darkened, smoke-filled church, fitfully and confusedly lit up by vivid lightning, was emptied as sedately and calmly as in the full light of day, with this difference, that all who could sing joined fervently in the hymn, swayed by an irresistible magnetism, their steps measured by the stately rhythm of the martial melody. The choir marched out last, beginning the hymn for the third time, and behind them, with his flockwell ahead, came the aged vicar, slowly descending the pulpit steps, where the young curate, flushed and exultant, waited to give his senior precedence and share the honour of being last with him.

The storm had by this time abated, the weird bell-ringing ceased; through the unpainted clerestory and aisle windows a full moon shot a silver radiance, imparting an

unearthly lustre to the white-robed choir, the vicar’s white hair and the curate’s blonde crop. The organ music rolled on, mixed with the thud-thud of the fire-engine; but the organist was invisible, the lights extinguished, and the west end shrouded in thick smoke.

No one remembered when the organ ceased: the lad who worked the bellows could only dimly recall being half-stifled with smoke, caught up in strong arms, and a slit and knotted surplice tied round him by someone who lowered him into the church, and bade him make quickly for the open door, visible in a shaft of moonlight. This he did, and fainted just outside.

The fire, beginning in the lightning-struck belfry, had been promptly shut off from the organ gallery, and thus from the church, by closing and locking the stair-foot doors from within. But a side gallery had caught, and, though the fire had been got under in each place, the smoke had become very dense at the west end by the time the church was emptied. Beyond a few broken limbs, bruises, and cases of nervous shock, no one was hurt, nor was the damage to the church great.

The Westlands and Beatrice sat late round the fire that night, the doctor eloquent on his cherished grievance of insufficient means of exit in case of fire or panic, and fervid in praise of the sense and courage of the man who first turned off the gas at the main, and then started the hymn at the critical moment. “His voice was like a cathedral bell,” he said. “By the way, who was he?”

“And where is he?” added Beatrice.

They found him next morning, face downwards, on the gallery floor. Westland said that he must have been dead for some hours, and unconscious probably for more. A small crowd gradually entered the church, as the rumour of the death spread. Dr. Ashworth, who had been busy appraising the damage done to the tower, made his way through them to the font, at the foot of which, just inside the church, the unknown

organ-player, with the smoke-stains removed from his face, was laid in his last deep sleep.

The old vicar was pre-occupied: he was thinking of the weird bell-ringing of the previous night that he had just been discussing in the belfry with Beatrice. "Like wedding bells," they agreed, "forbidden by man, but rung by Heaven's angel, the lightning."

He forgot the bells when he saw the quiet face of the dead: he looked on it, and was silent for a space. Then, spreading his hands in act of benediction, he said softly, as if thinking aloud, "The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God."

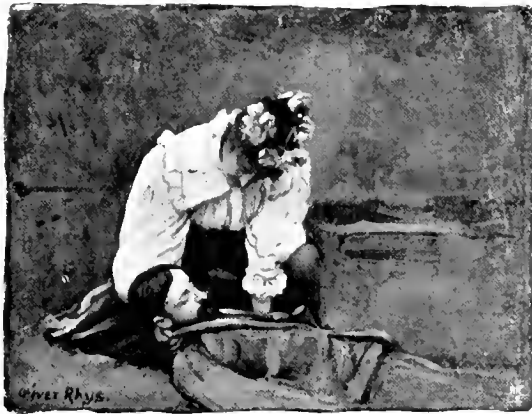
After another silent pause, raising his

bowed head and turning to the little crowd, "Friends," he said, "This was a righteous man. When you fled in faithless panic to your own destruction, he recalled you to holy courage and prayerful trust in the Most High. He saved this house of prayer from burning, and the people from a dreadful death. He thought of others and forgot himself."

He had scarcely spoken when the crowd parted at the sound of a sharp cry to admit a tall, slender woman, with a marble face and eyes of fire. At her approach the dead man's head—mechanically reverting to a former position—turned as if to welcome her, and she knelt by his side.

"It is Robin, Robin Ashworth!" she said.

MAXWELL GRAY.



FINIS.

ERNEST NORMAND AND HIS WORKS.

If one were asked to define the chief qualities which go to form a perfect union, one would assuredly give first place to mutual sympathy; similar tastes, hopes and occupation; an equality of success sufficient to allay the smaller weaknesses, which the best of us possess, of envy and jealousy, and an honest admiration of each other's achievements. This may not meet the old ideal, where the man must be the all-giving Sun God and the woman the worshipping Clytie, but I maintain that it is more healthy, lasting, and complete than the time-honoured oak and ivy partnership which even the sanctity of centuries has not made convincing. Admitting the contention, then the ideal has in every particular been attained by Mr. Ernest Normand and his talented wife, who has already been presented to ATLANTA readers under her *nom de guerre*, Henrietta Rae. It was Mr. Normand himself who qualified my admiration at such an Elysian example of matrimony: he pointed out the danger there was of one out-stripping the other in the race for success, and the consequent heartburning in the breast of the lesser light: the unconscious rivalry and disparagement that may alienate the early ties of love and admiration.



Fortunately, such shadows have never darkened the happiness of our united couple. Their triumphs have been coincident, their progress has been parallel. This latter fact reflects more to the credit of Mr. Normand, as his adoption into the army of the brush dates from a rather later period than that of Miss Rae. She may be said to have used a crayon in her cradle: at eleven years old she was a thorough art student, while her

future husband was eating out his heart in commercial captivity. There was indeed no incentive in his family history to lead him to painting: his ancestors were prosperous men of business, the light of colour had never drawn them from their dreams of bullion, and so it was ordained that the young Ernest should go the way of his progenitors.

Several years were spent in Germany by way of completing his novitiate to mammon, but the cravings of his art would not be stifled. As time passed the desire grew even stronger: his leisure

was passed in drawing from the antique and studying the old masters. Of course there was the usual hesitation in taking a definite step; the small voice of prudence which bids us

"... rather bear those ills we have

Than fly to others that we know not of." Then there was the natural distaste to entering into competition with those who were considerably his juniors. But these at last



[By Ernest Normand.]

THE STORY TELLER.

gave way before the stronger impulse: at the age of twenty-two he finally threw aside the pen for the brush. Then came the difficult task of acquiring in a year or so the solid ground-work which should be spread over the period of adolescence. But the energy and resolve were there, and when the labours of the day were over they were followed by classes in a night school. Among the scenes of these first efforts was, most fateful spot! the British Museum. It makes the brain reel to attempt a calculation of how many matches that solemn pile is responsible for. If any-one were to ask me for the cockney equivalent of the groves of Venus, I should direct the enquirer to Great Russell Street. There is something peculiarly seductive in the atmosphere of the vast, hushed galleries—a subduing repose, almost a sense of loneliness, which invites one to put down one's work and exchange ideas with the nearest fellow-student, who is, more likely than not, of the opposite gender. It is all so irresponsible, the propinquity so inevitable. Perhaps the youth is more advanced than the girl and assists her with a difficult piece of foreshortening, thus establishing a sentiment of trust and dependence: or maybe the young man himself is in difficulties, and a little sympathy and praise are then most dangerous.

At any rate, it was here that Mr. Normand first met Miss Rie. As before observed, she had already the advantage of several years' study, and was a student in the Royal Academy Schools. He was also advised to attempt the preliminary examination for Burlington House, but on the first two occasions he failed to pass the standard, and felt deeply his deficiencies in technical instruction. The difficulties at the present day would have been still more severe, when anatomy and life-studies are necessary. However, at the third essay, the young artist was successful, and was admitted to the Academy, and there the real work began, for Mr. Normand is no believer in self-tuition undirected. Still, even the assiduous application which he gave to his studies in the classes was for a

time discounted by his haste to make up for the lost years; he commenced to paint pictures before he was really master of technique, and the obstacles with which he had to contend in consequence of this lack has made him an emphatic opponent of premature painting.

Time righted these early errors: Mr. Normand was soon at work upon some of the important subject pictures which have given him such an honourable position in English art. There is a picture of a Moorish girl, at present in his studio, which was painted as long ago as 1883, showing a mature breadth and grasp of colour. The following year saw the production of "A Palace, yet a Prison," which sold for the respectable sum of three hundred pounds. This little windfall was the direct cause of a wedding and the beginning of that dual struggle for fame into which the green-eyed one has never peeped. Prudence might have suggested a postponement for more solid prospects, but after all there were two bread-winners to battle with the proverbial wolf, and the mutual support they gave each other more than compensated for the expenses of housekeeping. Their marriage was followed by a most important step in their future career: they settled themselves in the midst of that famous coterie in Holland Park and came in touch with the leading artists of the day. They were warmly received into the fold and made much of: Leighton, Richmond, Val Prinsep, and others were constant visitors to the studio, criticising with no sparing hand, but always to the advantage of the youthful couple.

It was thus that they found out both their strength and their weakness. For instance, Mr. Normand's tendency was towards archaeology: in his earlier works he attempted to give to scriptural subjects a realism which was altogether opposed to the devotional sentiment. It was the late Lord Leighton who pointed out the defects of this bias: in his dictum archaeology was only valuable as a detail in the scheme of a picture. The design was the main point, his own method



ESTHER DENOUNCING HAVAN.

By Ernest Normand

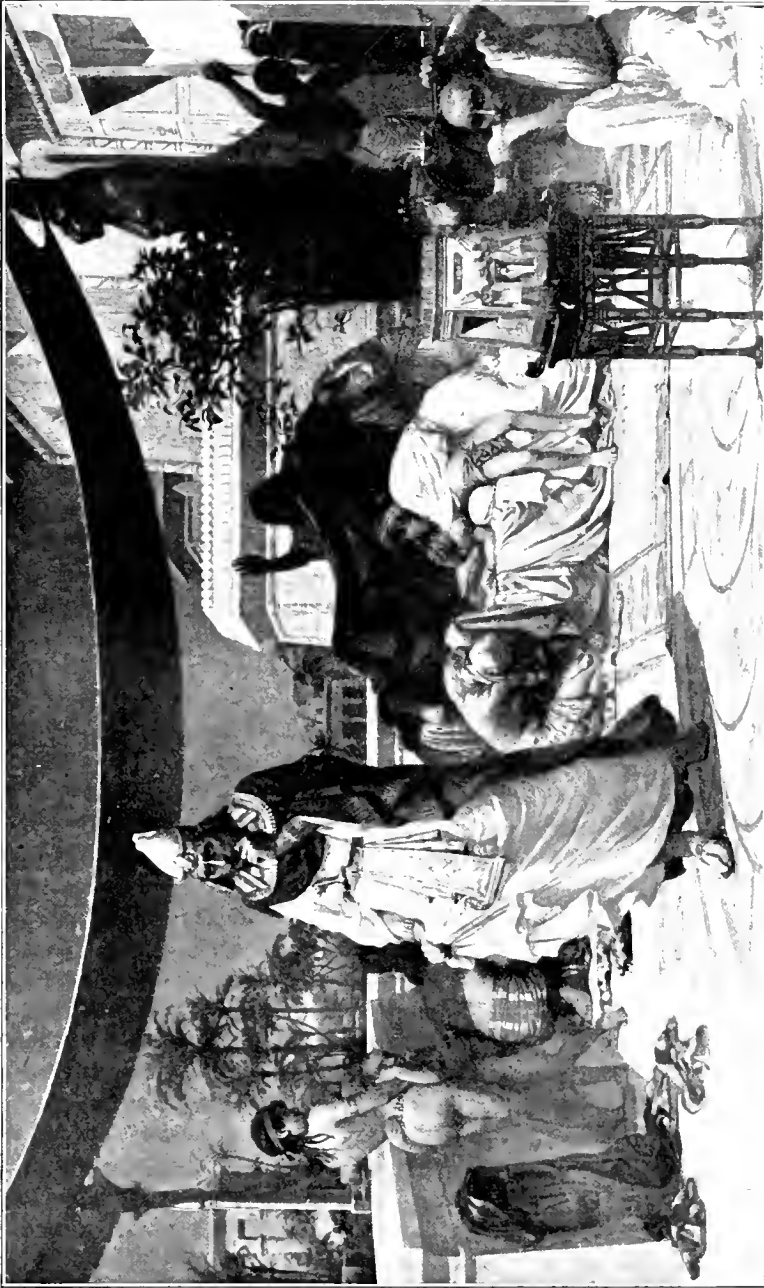
being to treat the composition first as silhouette, working out the details in black and white until the grouping and accessories had all their proper values. The great President seldom departed from these elaborate studies in monotone: once they satisfied his fastidious tastes, the picture itself followed without a break. He always declared that no alterations in the original conception should be made on the canvas, and his unusual powers of mentally completing an idea enabled him to carry out his theory. His system has been closely adopted by Miss Rae, who gives the same preliminary care to the smallest details. Mr. Normand's *modus operandi* is his own: with him a picture progresses, new ideas and improvements suggesting themselves even in the final stages. Still he is quite as warm in his gratitude to the memory of Leighton as is Mrs. Normand; they both feel that whatever they are or may be, they owe to his dominating influence. His personality guided them in their early difficulties; it taught them to walk alone. What he condemned they knew was at fault, what he passed they had no hesitation in submitting to the world.

But the undoubted advantages which such associations bestowed could not fail after a time to have their reverse side: what was at first a stimulus and a staff to lean upon became a check on spontaneous efforts. Husband and wife had now learnt to fly alone, and they wanted space and freedom to work out their own individualities. They therefore resolved to cut themselves off from the brilliance and culture of Kensington and to bury themselves in the wilds of Norwood. And anyone who has visited them in their exile will be inclined to think that *solitude à deux* has many compensations in their case. Passing through the pretty villa, replete with art trophies and souvenirs, one comes into an old-world garden, with fruit trees in galore and zig-zag paths leading up a gradual slope to the summit. Here is the great glass studio where the two work together in absolute seclusion: one might be fifty miles from the

din of London, for the grounds are extensive, stretching for a considerable distance on the further side to the larger house where Mr. Normand, senior, lives. The dimensions of the studio are truly palatial, and more than sufficient for the big pictures in which they both indulge. Here may be seen in their early stages the works for next year's Academy: Mr. Normand has a decorative triad on the theme of Pandora which will be somewhat of a departure from his recognised style. He rather deplores the modern fashion, which necessitates a man's following a fixed groove.

"Once a man becomes associated with a distinct type of picture," he observed, "the public will have nothing else from him. People would hesitate to buy a Tadema without marble, or a Leighton without drapery. I have heard it said, 'Oh, So-and-so is always the same,' when no doubt the artist would be only too pleased to vary his style, but unfortunately he has to live, and to meet this human limitation he must satisfy the popular demand. A good instance of this is Leighton's "Clytie." In its first conception it was mainly landscape: a gorgeous effect of sunlight which absorbed everything else. The figure of the girl was very small and quite secondary. But in the R.A. it was quite ignored and failed to sell, so that Leighton was obliged to treat the subject in his more conventional method. But to my mind the first was infinitely more poetical. No, if a painter wishes to alter the style that has made his name, he must give something so unquestionably superior that the change will be condoned."

In talking to Mr. Normand, one is struck principally by two points—his earnestness and his enthusiasm. Gifted with unusual fluency, he is able to impress his ideas graphically upon his hearer, and one leaves him with a wider and a more refined opinion of the artist's calling. In his view, a painter cannot be too many-sided: no knowledge, however mechanical, will come amiss to him, for culture, or the lack of it, is always shown



[By F. A. T. Norman.]

THE DEATH OF PHARAOH'S FIRST BORN.

in a man's work. Every artist has his distinct vocation, but this will only manifest itself when he has gone through the drudgery of technique and become master of his craft. Undue haste to achieve original work has handicapped many men of genius, but once having attained to this pitch, let him cast off all outside influence.

Mr. Normand is too much of a dreamer to enjoy the purely manual work of a picture; to him the happiest period is in the conception of an idea and the mental treatment of it. With the progress of the picture come the alternating fits of depression, and even of despair, to which the artistic temperament is prone; the models are an obstacle, the realisation is not equal to the fancy, there is the desire to continually alter and put the picture aside for something else. "This, to people constituted as I am, is the most fatal habit of all," he observed; "a picture can never be taken up again: unless it is finished right off, the original idea is lost and the enthusiasm gone. I quite welcome the Academy season because I am compelled to get my work completed for it."

His pictures always display this conscientious attention to detail: there is no cheap impressionism about them, no smart tricks of the brush to conceal want of modelling or glaring omission. Every point shows careful thought and painstaking workmanship. It is perhaps in his composition that Mr. Normand is seen at his very best: he considers the whole subject as a design and everything is kept subservient to the main conception. There is generally a strong dramatic element in his subjects, as will be gathered from the examples accompanying this brief paper: in these will be seen the skill with which the grouping is arranged and every detail used to throw up the chief actors in the story, although there is missing the rich eastern colour which is another distinguishing attribute. But they will serve to recall pleasant memories to those who have seen them in their entirety.



THE castle frowned down on the peasants' hovel, which scarce blinked with feeble scrofulous eyes to this great thing coming betwixt it and Heaven's vastness; yet Osmunda dared to match the blue of her eyes with the azure beyond; dared to do this and more; smiled in my lord's dark face when he rode by, hawk on wrist, tossed him good e'en, as his cavalcade picked across the lengthening shadows homewards.

"Good Luck! wench," whined the dame within, "thou'lt have us yet among the toads in the dungeons yonder; my lord's a hard man, and brooks naught but servile ways from his thralls."

"You and your Goodman may be his thralls, not I," quoth Osmunda; "Flack, I am as good as he, I have ten fingers and toes, and so has he—no more, no less."

"Pest take thy quick tongue, wench; set thou to and get the supper, and when morrow comes get thee out of my lord's sight; there's more ways than one to the devil this side of heaven!"

But to my lord the woman spake otherwise.

"If so please my lord wills it, Osmunda shall come to the castle and sing her little songs; my lord be too gracious and Osmunda but too ready." This on her knees, with eyes seeking the dust. And then it was: "Girl, take thy grass-green kirtle and bind thy hair in the silken net that came from t'other side of the sea."

The girl went quick enough. At the castle they burned wood fires French fashion, and the great hall was sweet-scented with straw that once had borne the mighty golden wheat ears down by the river.

There were eyes to see and ears to hear besides my lord's at the castle, and Osmunda liked well, too, the smack of the viands that found place below the salt. She knew some songs in the French palaver. Hugh, the



By Louie d'Armand.

PLAYTHINGS.

falconer, that had been with my lord across seas, must needs bend her stubborn tongue to their framing, and she had come to a fair pretty taste in singing them, so that at least times my lord would often call for this and that.

One evening she, tripping homewards, happened on my lord baron coming on his destrier upwards to the castle.

"*La belle amour, la belle amour,*" sang Osmunda, thinking to pass him; but belike the baron had fancy for music that spring e'en, for he carried her to the pleasance walk by the battlements, and must needs have ditty after ditty.

"Would'st like, pretty one," says he, "to see the sunshine and the flowers you sing of?"

"Good lack, my lord, is it indeed sunshine and flowers?" asked she, so sweet, "me thought 'twas all tra-la-la to a fair tuning; sunshine and flowers, i'lack—what have we in the meads yonder, then?" And she pointed down to the streaks of gold by the river, where the lowering sun caught the mallow weeds and marigolds.

"And mayhap—such is this foul English heaven—the morrow will be chill and gray, and those same meads dun-hued!"

"Then," cried Osmunda, "I also shall be dun-hued, and sit spinning down yonder by the smoking sticks, while Goody shows me what a murrain wrong I did ever to enter this world at all."

On a sudden my Lord Raoul's dark face startled her anear her own.

"The gammar shall be whipped at the post—I swear it—if ever I hear alike of such words as these, Osmunda!"

A strand of her pale hair swept his lips.

"Beware, beware, my lord! folks say the black magic's in the colour of my hair."

She sprang aside so that the tress leapt from his fingers, which stretched themselves to her, for it seemed she was perilously near the battlement's edge.

"Meddle not with magic, it might put us all asleep for next hundred years, or maybe send a distemper among the flocks."

My lord answered no word of lip, but he stood still, his eyes wearing a look as if some spell were surely laid upon him. Osmunda swept a curtsey, that yellow hair falling cloudwise to her feet, then turned swift to disappear in the shadow of the turret stair.

Thus had it been some great while 'twixt the girl and my lord; she evasive as a moon-beam, he ever putting forth to grasp; only a man grows weary of chasing will-o'-the-wisps, and lately his face wore a stern look, and he sat ever silent at the board.

Among the poor hearths at the hill's foot there was muttering when the glint of Osmunda's strange, pale hair caught the glance of unwilling eyes, there were those who would have cheerfully lent it a warmer gleam, but it was not come to this, and they merely crossed themselves as Father Thomas bid, drawing closer their garments if they must needs pass her side of the way. And Osmunda, caring neither jot nor tittle for all their sullenness, trilled her outlandish songs, weaved and spun for the foster parents, and sent beating to a faster time the heart of Hugh Forester day by day.

"Yea or nay? Come, answer me, Osmunda; belike my lord goes into Kent to settle that difference you wot of 'twixt him and Baron Guillimot, ere many suns be set; and I would have you safe up there in the castle with the women, and away from these muttering tongues."

They stood on the narrow footway spanning the water—Hugh the falconer and his fair—and from the young green of the meadows came the twitter of mating partridges mingled with the river's swirl.

"What think you, my good man? That I must e'en be spoused because Gammar Linlot and Gaffer Mullin shake heads at my poor hair's hue; and how about the songs you've so bravely taught me? Once I be spoused it'll be a-done with all the music."

She thrust her pink face so near his own that her breath was on it, and yet when he put out his hand, she was shifted so that

it came down on no soft flesh, but clap on the bridge's rail.

"Methinks, Osmunda, there's truth in their muttering; sure, you be a fairy changeling, and have dealing with magic."

Your benison on our Lady there, Sir Falconer, that I take no greater vantage, and also that you pass so soon into a far country that's free of my spells! Good e'en, goodman, I must be home, or else there'll be no benison for Osmunda this night."

She was past him and away, running swiftly so that she seemed in truth like some fairy thing skimming in the spring twilight amid the yielding grass of the meads. Be sure Hugh the falconer—too angry to sigh—betakes him homeward in no gentle mood; hitting out with his staff he comes amuck of goodman Hunter's hound, that runs howling to his master with half his teeth knocked out; and folks can make fair reasoning with whom the noon's been spent, so that more tongues than one were set a-clacking over the business.

"If you were men, you would hound the changeling from your doors." Someone claimed these to be words of Father Thomas, but when or where spoken no man could well say. The man of God had no love of Osmunda's lifting, his two ugly ferret eyes were always pointing down his nose at the lifting of her voice, for he had ever a fair word in my Lady Geraldine's favour, and a hope for her quick coming as chatelaine to the castle. But my lord was grown quiet on this subject of late, and bore no questioning, neither did he let fall any tidings, for all the insidious probing of Sir Priest; meanwhile Osmunda came and went, with a saucy look and twist of the head even for Sir Priest if their shadows chanced to cross in the spring sunshine.

Then there came on a sudden a change. It was a stretch of a sen-night or so, and the girl would go no more to the castle, and Goody's tongue let loose like seven furies within the mud walls; maybe my lord's almoner threw some weight into the scale.

"Pest take the girl, the baron will clap us

all i' the dungeons if you go not up yonder; he brooks no thwarting, and this be the sixth time he have sent for thee to sing. And here, you idle good-for-nothing, you sit awaiting for other folks to earn your bread; a mighty fine dame be you, but mark ye, I ha' most adone with patience."

Thus spake Goody, and mostly Osmunda, grown strangely dumb, gave back no word, only each day there was less pink in her cheeks. At night, when the goodman and his wife lay snoring, she crept often to the window and crouched there, staring from it, but whether at the pale moon or to the great blackness of the castle on its hill, it were hard to say; the tears then dropped down between her slender fingers. Once when she was thus kneeling, the moon shining pale on her and the cloud of gold that kissed her feet, on a sudden another face from across the wall was thrust close to hers; a thin dark visage, having eyes set sinister near each other. Osmunda shivered, and fear froze her tears, and yet it was a human face, for the lips gave forth human utterance:—

"In very truth, the witch at her spells!" Then a terrible fear grew upon Osmunda, and a quick involuntary turning of her thoughts towards the safe shelter of the castle, from whence, most nights, a light gleamed across like a good omen in the darkness; from whose casement it shone well she knew.

Why not thither, early to morrow morn? A truce then to wagging heads and petty slavery, a coign of vantage over these filthy hinds, almost as high a seat as even yon venomous priest can ape unto; and, troth, Hugh Forester be a goodly man and kind, what better fortune than to be his dame?

Yet lies there somewhat betwixt—an olive face, with two goodly brown eyes. It were better these same eyes had been more fathomable; Osmunda could no more banish their omnipotence than change the colour of her hair that had gotten her so evil a name.

The days were become indeed a weariness,

the nights, 'twixt sleepless vigil and secret commune, vile; and all grew worse because she went not to the castle and saw him seldom. Yet if her eyes lighted on him, so much sharper was the pain. And Hugh the falconer for ever inportuning. Oh, my lord! my lord! what mischief have you wrought, but how may it be mended!

The year was lengthened out into a wet summer, bringing a murrain on the fields and cattle, and putting low with fever many heads in the hinds' cots.

My lord was departed these two months, and largesse such as he always gave when things were in such straits as these, was a thing groaned for, but came not to the hard palms of the villagers. Goodman ne'er happened on Goodman these days without falling to a muttering that gathered strength as the days passed and the rains poured as if the heavens must dissolve themselves.

Strange signs evinced amid the sodden dreariness. Widow Beman's black cat was found changed to snow-white by the dame one morn; that it was the same animal she swore by its twisted hind leg. A circle of flame had been plainly seen dancing round the hovel where Osmunda dwelt, the frogs from the river pools passed in a multitude through the lowest-lying part of the village, swarming in and out of many dwellings, and the pest, with death in his wake, was since come to each of these.

Osmunda stirred out no more; the fever came not to her, but she was listless, and the black looks of the neighbours set her teeth chattering. A mysterious silence and sadness clung, heavy as the river mists, to everything, seeming to numb the senses.

Osmunda, sitting with folded, thin hands, caught the goodman squinnying up to her. With half-a-look round, if the gammar might be there or not, quoth he:

"It'll be six hours or more nor less to Hemel, girl, belike there's no fever there; what think ye to try thy luck across the river? B'aint no luck hereabouts, girl, and there's them that do say"—

On the very moment Sir Priest passed by with his silent footfall, and brown robe wrapped close; his fingers were busied with the beads wherewith the lips moved also in unison, but upon Osmunda fell such a flash of murderous hate, that a little cry came from her. When he was gone she started up, and her white fingers twisted round goodman's knotty ones. "I will away to-night."

"Not this e'en; to-morrow at dawn I will point out the way that lies the closest." There was half-a-tear in goodman's eye; like getteth like all the world over, and Osmunda had mostly one of her sunny smiles for Mike, whose dull skin prickled to its warmth, so that his foolish slow brain half fancied magic in the matter.

Hugh the falconer met his death in the field against the Kentish baron, just as the tide of affairs turned for my lord. When Baron Raoul saw his henchman's face turned up to the sky, he sickened, though well used to sight and smell of blood, and had little liking for his home-coming. The baron was a good soldier, yet ever tender if women's tears were concerned, and he had no small dread to see Osmunda's. She was ever in his mind as he headed his home-coming troop on the great black destrier; the clink of armour and picking of horses' feet made monotonous music, to which my lord's thoughts went digewise, with always Osmunda and her sorrows uppermost. "Mignon," as he called her in that tongue which, with his Gallic parentage, came ever the glibbest and most sweet. He thought of her, silken clothed, with starry flowers decking those wondrous tresses; he thought of her as having love-light shining in her eyes at his coming, cheeks grown damask-hued at his touch; he dreamed of her giving a wife's gentle yielding to him, a wife's caress; he dreamed God wots what other golden folly, taking small heed of the rain and the grumbling thereat of his soaked men behind.

The cavaleade had crested a great hill, twin to that on which the castle stood. Grim and

grey its towers frowned across the valley where, amid clustering hamlet, wound the silver ribbon of the stream. Yonder lay the narrow spanning of the river, whereon Raoul, one forenoon, had spied Osmunda with Hugh the falconer in what seemed wondrous close conclave to eyes grown o'er sharp in marking nothings, a hundred yards further lay that spot where in spring yellow daffies grew plentiful, and my lord had happened on Osmunda weaving chains or such like folly for some little maid that prattled as she wove.

The recollection of this and other things was very present with the young baron as he sat with slackened bridle, gazing over the flat meads below.

Then on a sudden life stirred in the seemingly dead hamlet. My lord, looking idly on, bethought him of an ant-hill when a human foot has come anigh it. He half smiled to see the good folk, in the distance scarce larger than ants, so alive when no cause showed. They were got into two streams now, one to right and one to left, coming towards the hill, whereon stood he and his horsemen, hid by the trees, and their voices began to be heard. Then it was that his squire moved to my lord's side.

"There be chase down yonder," quoth he, pointing his arm, "see you the hare? Methought I glimpsed her a moment ago, yet now—there! there, my lord! Coming towards this hill. Poor soul! see you how the stones fly, and she be blown a'ready, she stumbles every step a'most—she falls—no! on again! 'Tis fine pluck, my lord; who can the woman be?"

"A woman, Guillaume, say you 'tis? And can ye see a woman hounded thus? Forward, ye curs! forward every man!"

Behind, this yelling murderous hell, before, such height as must burst the heart from her panting, labouring breast, all around pitiless showering stones. Oh God! what cruel death, and if not this the flames. Onward, though her bleeding limbs be like lead, and a mist of blood swims before her everywhere, belike the flames already, she fancies she

feels their lick; how long will the dying last, oh Lord, have pity? No, no, not yet, the fire is afterwards. A skimming stone recalls her failing senses, but she stumbles—is down—no, one more essay. Oh, what pitiless heaven! this bursting heart bursting head. Is everything turned to blood? 'Tis the fire again. How it scorches, how it burns; and yonder be my lord's face, will he, too, let her burn?

The sodden turf gives back the echo of the horses' feet, the trees part for a hundred more, a white plume at head. The yelling crowd gives way before the oncoming thunder, the vermin is for skulking back to its lair if it may come there, for not a rat's eye among them but marks my lord baron kneel beside the poor, hounded girl lying senseless at last, for all her pluck, in the mire at the hill's foot.

There were some who saw even how he gathered her to his breast and laid his lips to her bleeding face, how he, with touch gentler than a woman's, looked to her hurts and chafed the poor hands to bring back life.

Maybe the contact of his warm pulsing life will beat off death; if she be in truth going what matter that he has her in his arms this last moment, that his lips are on hers?

"Osmunda, Osmunda! go not from me! Osmunda, stay!"

Such agony of pleading should unseal her ear, should reach heaven, when his tears, too, are streaming, to see the labouring of the poor heart.

"Osmunda, Osmunda, live for me!"

He, looking with hungry eyes, marks on a sudden a quivering of the ashen face. "Osmunda, stay!"

Such wan weary smile, but more joy in it, nevertheless, than is often seen this side of heaven, for my lord's face is above her, with that look she longed for; she turns half to him, essaying to clasp his neck, yet passing in the act out of consciousness once more.

But he knows now love has twice saved her, and that for ever on, no shadow would come betwixt him and her.

ETTA COURTNEY.



BIRNAM WOOD.

RAMBLES IN MILLAIS' LAND.

ANY country which is associated with the name of a great man or woman is bound to be interesting. It may be flat, unwatered, monotonous, or dreary, but for all that it is stamped with the hall mark of interest, and anyone who can, takes the opportunity of visiting it. Few places can offer greater attractions in this way than the lovely Vale of Tay and those charming Highland sisters, Birnam and Dunkeld, which are situated one on either side of the river. Birnam is, of course, a familiar name to all readers of Shakespeare, and "Great Birnam Wood" is like a shrine to the pilgrim-readers of the great poet. Unfortunately, there is but little left to recall the camping place of Macduff's army, for this oak and plane tree, each over a thousand years old, are the only survivors of the once grand forest which afforded the "leafy screens" to the warriors, and causes such despair to Macbeth at Dunsinane, when his sentry tells him that from his outlook he has seen the wood begin to move.

"Fear not till Birnam Wood
Do come to Dunsinane."

Such had been the witches' assurance to Macbeth, and now, sure enough, Birnam was coming, and he and his castle were utterly undone.

Dunkeld, also, can take us far back into the days which have made history; it used to be the capital of Caledonia, and the home of St. Columba, its patron saint. Years of civil war followed, and the Cathedral was frequently the stronghold of some contending party—now of the Cameronians, now of the Jacobites. To-day it is a peaceful, beautiful spot, and the home of one of Her Majesty's oldest friends, the Dowager Duchess of Athole. But of all the facts connected with this lovely Vale of Tay which render it interesting, is that it was the home for so many years of the great painter, the late Sir John Millais. Many of his pictures were painted there, for he was an ardent lover of Scotland, and never so happy as when working, fishing, or shooting up there. Every autumn found him at Birnam Hall, which stood just inside the grounds of Murthly, and where the fishing and shooting were of the best. Fond as he

was of these sports, Sir John gave the chief part of his time to his art. Day after day he was to be found at work, never daunted by storm or cold, always cheerful and cordial to those who came in contact with him, and much liked by everyone in consequence. Some of the pictures which have done most to make his name familiar as a household word, are the result of this labour in "Bonnie Scotland." "Chill October," that most wonderful work which was the success of one year's Royal Academy, and the admiration of all who saw it then and after, is a bit of Glen Birnam, one of the saddest, loneliest spots to be found even in this quiet Highland resort. The picture was done in October, when the softness of autumn and the mists of this beautiful month of the dying year were over it. You who have seen it will remember the clinging rain-sheets over the trees, the few struggling leaves still left on the branches, and the many which have gone to make a carpet beneath them. There are birches and pines, both rearing their emaciated branches in this glade in the glen, each standing sentinel over the past glories of summer and grim harbingers of greater desolation in winter. So life-like is it, so much like a grey day torn out of Nature's treasury, that one can almost feel the chill, damp wind coming through the trees, and the smell of the moistened pines steals over us with a refreshing memory of autumnal holidays in "Heatherland." The Rumbling Bridge and the Falls of Braan are amongst the interesting show places of Dunkeld, and these have been immortalised by Sir John in his "The



FALLS OF BRAAN.

Sound of Many Waters," the Academy picture of 1890. The falls here are magnificent, and when swollen, as they are, with



VALE OF ATHOLE.

rain or snow, in the winter, or after a violent storm, they are grand in their mighty turbulent rushing; and it was during the latter part of 1889 and the first two months of 1890 that the great artist did his work. The cold was intense, and the wind was often so violent that he had to have all kinds of contrivances to keep the canvas firm whilst he transmitted to it the angry foam-crested falls of the Braan. The young Highlander who used to attend to Sir John during the months he spent working near the falls, made a rough little wooden hut, which partly screened him from the weather, and yet in no way interrupted the view. This young man, who was much attached to the famous artist, was often greatly distressed at the small amount of food he would eat, and if Sir John did not take anything with him when he left the humble homestead just by the bridge, in which he lodged while doing this picture, Peter soon followed him with something; but many a day, to Peter's great regret, Sir John painted on a pipe. He was always an inveterate smoker, and he used to say that his pipe ful-

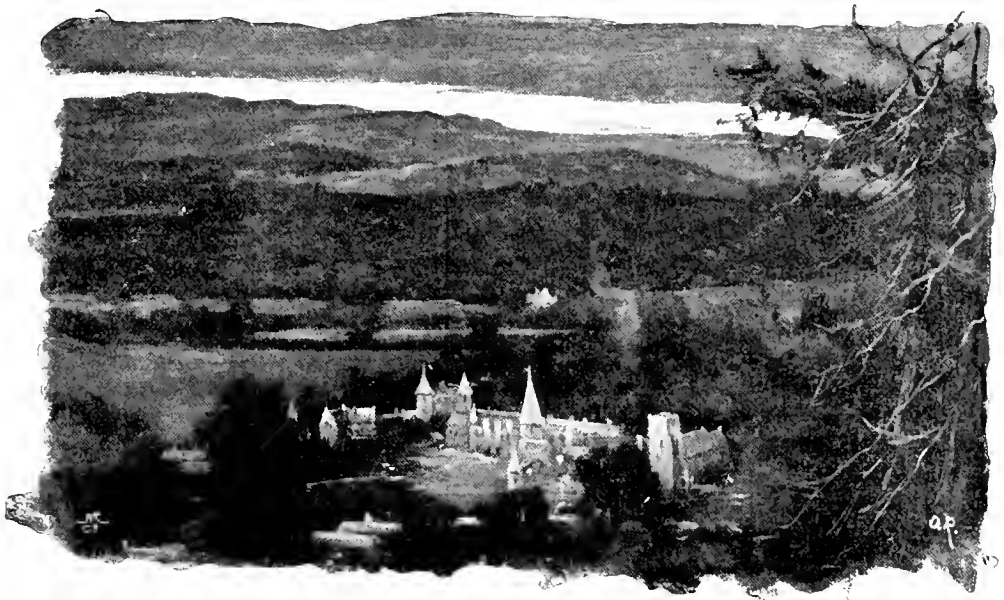
filled the duties of feeding and of warming him, and thereby of comforting him.

Another very favourite work of his was "Murthly Moss," painted not far from Birnam Hall, where the lovely green lichen grows in such profusion round about "Old Murthly," and where, it is said, almost every tree known in Scotland is to be found. Old Murthly Castle is a very venerable building; indeed, its origin is not even known. In Wallace and Bruce's time it was the property of the Irelands, then of the Abercrombies, and lastly of the Stuarts of Grandtully, who also owned Grandtully Castle near Aberfeldy, one of the most romantic of Scottish homes, indeed, it is the original of Baron Bradwardine's Castle "Tully Veolan,"—in Sir Walter Scott's "Waverley." I must just add here that the present Duchess of Portland was born at Murthly. The same delightful old castle figures in the master's "Christmas Eve," and this time we have a view of it all coated with snow and silvered with frost, surely an ideal spot in which to spend Christmas. The picture is so charming,

so like what one loves to think Christmas was in the good old days, that it is small wonder it is such a favourite. It appeals to every British heart, as so many of Sir John's works do, because he draws his inspiration from the sights and scenes of our own country, and does not think that it needs classical Greece, beautiful Italy, or the gorgeous East to stimulate an artist to produce masterpieces.

"The Fringe of the Moor," another of Millais' exquisite landscapes, was painted from the pretty house owned by the Duke and Duchess of Rutland in Birnam, and known as St. Mary's Tower. This was done during the early days of sweet September, when the heather was just donning its purple coat and the pines on Birnam Hill had taken on a less vivid green. In this the quaintly outlined shoulders of the Hill are visible, and beyond it, just skirting it, with its wonderful promise of freedom and expanse, is one of those glorious tracts of land, which, together with the mountains and the lochs, have made Scotland the magnificent country it is. "The Fringe of the Moor"; the very name is suggestive of holidays, of grouse, of

happy ever-to-be-remembered days amongst the gorse and the heather. But of all the views of this rarely beautiful land which Sir John Millais has bequeathed to an art-loving public, is the magnificent panorama afforded by the Vale of Athol when looking up from the ruined hamlet of Tomgarrow. It needs all one's reminiscences of the most desolate parts of the east coast of Ireland to enable one to make any comparison to this cluster of unroofed tenements which the few inhabitants who are left in it dignify by the name of "toon." It is quite difficult to believe that any human being exists amidst such general devastation, but the thin lines of smoke which issue from the roof holes proclaim the vicinity of peat fires, and the black tripod filled with refuse vegetable and morsels of oat cake has evidently been set there for the delectation of "piggy." A mournful cow grazes on the unproductive grass around, and once or twice in the hour the cackle of a hen, or the crowing of a cock announce the attempts at poultry farming of this tiny community. Millais might have painted this weirdly lonely place and called it "Far from the madding crowd," but he has



BIRNAM.

only made it the stepping stone to much greater things, and from its depressing basis he has given us his perfect dream of often unexpressed longing, his cry of the town prisoner, his hope of the country dweller, his "Over the hills and far away." Everything that is fairest in nature has been pressed into this canvas, the guardian hills, beyond which we like to believe lies the land of freedom, the glamour of changing colour, the smile of the sun on one point and the flashing dimple of water in another. This is a masterpiece amongst landscapes, a picture which once seen can never be forgotten, and

I believe it is no secret that the painting of it was a source of the deepest pleasure to its originator.

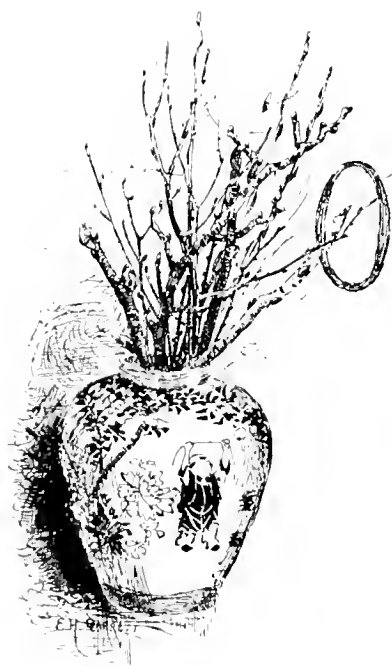
Elizabeth Barrett Browning says that

"Hills draw like heaven,

And stronger sometimes holding out their hands
To pull you from the vile flats up to them."

Evidently Millais had something of the same feeling for them, they drew him up to the highest latitudes of art; he always painted them reverently, grandly, and as nature's monuments should be, and to him there were no hills so beautiful as those of Scotland.

LAURA ALEX. SMITH



HARU SAN.

Here she lies, her dancing done,
Plum trees shade her from the sun,
Little feet that danced and ran
Light as air, O Haru San.

Little hands we praised so, when
Playing on the samisen
Hands and feet are still, nor can
Music wake O Haru San.

Oh, we miss her busy feet,
Not in tea-house, nor in street,
Hear we any songs we knew
Now her grave-flowers gather dew

Not a heart in all Japan,
But remembers Haru San.

Oh, her dancing days are done,
But to please the April sun.

Iris and anemone
Dance, and seem as fair as she,
Flowers have but a summer's span,
Even so, O Haru San.

NORA HOPPER.

LETTERS TO A DEBUTANTE BY A WOMAN OF THE WORLD.

I.—ON BEING PRESENTED.

To the *debutante* everything in the life that lies before her is seen more or less through the medium of rose-coloured spectacles. With youth on the prow, pleasure very naturally follows at the helm, and at the age of eighteen life seems to promise a never-ending panorama of delights. This state of things is natural and right. One "wears the rose of youth" only once, alas! and that indeed for too short a time. A joyless miserable youth is of all things most deplorable, and happiness, nay!—low be it said—even a little frivolity, never unfits people for the serious duties of life; they come soon enough and remain with us to the end of all things. Therefore, be merry while ye may, until comes the time when we shall be asked:

"Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table in a roar."

And, first of all, let me counsel my *debutante*, if she wishes her life to be profitable and pleasant, to be perfectly straightforward and honest in her dealings with all men. Crooked ways never pay in the end; scheming invariably defeats its own objects, and "Honesty is the best policy" throughout life. Apart from the morality of the question, it is foolish to tell stories or talk big, to pretend to be greater than you are. Detection is certain; and then comes the contempt of your associates, loss of friends, and what is even worse, the loss of self respect. A mind at ease gives happiness, and with happiness comes contentment.

Starting, therefore, from the stand-point of belief in happiness being the *summum bonum* of life, we begin to understand how important it is that a girl's conduct should, at the start in the great race, be like Cæsar's wife, "above suspicion." Let my *debutante* therefore be discreet in behaviour, not loud

of voice, not aggressive in demeanour, modest in the expression of her opinions, retiring, and willing to be guided by those who have more experience than she. The mannish girl and the effeminate man are equally unnatural and odious creations. What can be more beautiful than Milton's ideal of manhood and womanhood:

"For contemplation he, and valour form'd;
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace."

Of happiness, each one in the world has his or her own ideal. One thinks that to marry a Duke and to sit on the bench of a Duchess comprises all that is most desirable in life. Another defines happiness in her own mind as a state of luxury, in which a superfluity of tiaras, carriages and fine clothes figure. Yet another thinks happiness consists in popularity, a reputation for beauty, and endless admiration; and some there be who base their expectations of happiness on success in literature or art and who dream of future development into a George Eliot, or a Rosa Bonheur. No one who is worth anything is without ambition. The desire to be better or greater than we are is worthy of all praise, but the desire to *surpass* better or greater than we are is deserving of all contempt.

Take for your motto, therefore, my dear *debutante*, these lines from Cato's soliloquy:

"'Tis not in mortals to command success,
But we'll do more, Sempronius; we'll deserve it."

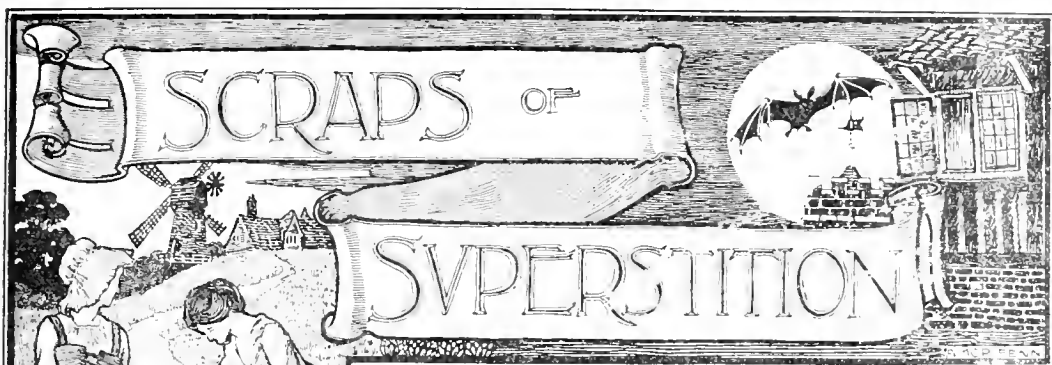
The young girl whose parents have a certain position in Society naturally begins her career by being presented to her Sovereign. This ordeal to the young and timid is full of uncalled for terrors. A lively imagination conjures up terrific fears of failure, humiliation and disaster. As a matter of fact there is nothing to dread but one's own self-consciousness and inexperience. To guard against the latter, it is, therefore, as well to have lessons in making the proper curtsy, in managing the train, and in backing out from the presence chamber in a graceful and proper manner. When you know clearly what is before you, and how to meet it, you will gain confidence and self-possession.

LETTERS TO A DEBUTANTE.

A *debutante's* presentation dress should be simple, but good. Tawdriness, such as over-trimming, imitation lace and artificial flowers, should be avoided. Let youth be your best ornament, and eschew jewellery unless you possess a string of real pearls, than which nothing is lovelier or more becoming. Dress-makers are very much given to loading a *debutante's* gown with flowers; they insist that it is necessary and pretty, and by much talking often gain their point. Nothing really looks better than a plain white silk skirt, and bodice softly draped with chiffon, or a little dainty silver or pearl embroidery. The train of a rich satin, falling in graceful folds unspoilt by tawdriness of bows or flowers. White gloves and shoes are of course *de rigueur* when one goes to Court; and a bouquet is a great improvement to a toilette, especially the pretty "shower bouquets" now carried, and so often tied with satin ribbons.

Thus equipped with all the bravery of attire necessary for the occasion (plumes, veil, bouquet, and Court train), our *debutante* quits her mirror for a first participation in the pomp and circumstance of a Drawing Room. The wait in the carriage is weary, the crowd of staring people somewhat of an ordeal, but the longest lanes have their turnings, and eventually she finds herself entering the doors of Buckingham Palace. Directly facing is the room where all cloaks and wraps are left, and where, when needed, the trains are deftly folded and placed over ladies' arms by the attendants. Coming out of this, our *debutante* turns to the right and mounts the staircase leading to the Ball-room. In the corridor she hands her card to a gorgeously attired gentleman and is given another in its place, and warned that she must remove her right glove, as her's is a presentation. Next comes a rather wearisome performance, although the long waiting may be pleasantly beguiled by chatting with friends, looking at one's neighbour's gown, and so on. No wise or capable people are ever bored. There is always something in life to be found amusing and interesting

enough to entertain if only we keep our eyes and ears open. At a Drawing Room, therefore, unless you suffer from physical fatigue, mental weariness is almost impossible. Let me implore my novice, whatever happens, however long the waiting, to possess her soul in patience, and keep a calm, serene, dignified front to the world. The fussy, fidgetty, pushing, struggling people, who strive to be first through the barriers, gain nothing but contempt by the move. Really well-bred people do not push and elbow each other, and the hall-mark of *lady* is too precious a possession to be bartered for nothing better than a foremost place. Arrived at the last room, people are only admitted one by one, and in single file they follow each other to the ante-chamber, where, before entering the Royal presence their trains are let down and spread out to the best effect. Our *debutante* then enters a small and rather dark room, and almost immediately comes upon the presence of the Queen. On Her Majesty's right stands the Lord Chamberlain, to whom she hands her card, and who announces her. Then the *debutante* sinks low, puts forth her bare right hand for the Queen's fingers to rest upon, reverently touches her lips to the Royal hand, making no audible sound, rises gracefully and makes a side step to the right, where she curtsies low before the Princess of Wales, then not quite so low to the other Princesses and Princes in due order, until she has her train bundled over her left arm, and finds herself backing out and bowing as she goes finally reaching the next room, relieved, happy, and triumphant. Should the Queen have left, or should the Drawing Room be held by the Princess of Wales for Her Majesty, the *debutante* puts on her right glove since she does not kiss the hand of a Princess. Many ladies carry fans as well as bouquets, but this practice is not advisable for one unused to carrying a train and bouquet. It is to be hoped that these hints may be of service to some novice about to enter for the first time the scenes of Society.



SCRAPS OF SUPERSTITION

"Now all strange hours and all strange things are over." That is what the poet says, but with all due deference, they are not over, while the gardener

and the elder a thing of might and mystery, and May month brought the remembrance of "old gentleness, and old service, and many kind things that were forgotten."

"Drop no tears on your dead, lest you make them restless."

"Do not point your finger at a passing ship, or it will never come into port."

"Say the first three sentences of the Lord's Prayer when you see a shooting star."

"Sew on Ascension Day, and the lightning will be after you."

Here are four precepts that German girls keep in their hearts, and wherein they religiously believe; indeed, at my own school, kept by two excellent and unromantic Scotch ladies, we had a German governess whom we all loved dearly, whose pretty, fair head was stuffed full of curious rites, observances, and quaintest fancies. From her I learned that cobwebs bring good luck, and spiders bad—a curious paradox! that dreams on New Year's night always come true; that a sudden blast of wind heard at night bodes the passing of the Wandering Jew; that babies should not be allowed to see their own faces reflected in a glass before they are a year old, or they will certainly acquire an unenviable facility for seeing ghosts.

The farther east and north one goes the quainter the fancies seem to be, except in England, where the home of *real* superstition lies westwards, away in remote corners of Devon and Cornwall, especially in the latter. There are still to be found lucky wells and

Fancy still plants parsley and rue and rosemary in his garden. For rosemary is dear to the gentle folk, and birth and death and marriage have hallowed it; and parsley is a demon's plant, and must be sown nine times, for Lucifer takes tithe of all but the ninth sowing; and rue is flung after witches to prevent them overlooking and ill-wishing you; and where elves and demons and witches are in touch with humanity, though it be only through the leaf or the scent of a flower, "strange hours" are not over yet, let poets and philosophers say what they will. And it is well that mortal memories do not too readily let slip, I think, the memory of gracious immortal words and works and ways, handed down to us from days when the narcissus was "the coronet of the ancient goddesses"; when the gillyflower was immortal, the mandrake mortal, and fernseed was to be had for the picking up, and mistletoe was really the "merry tree,"

rocking stones, tales of people pixy-led into deep morasses, and children stolen away by the Little People into fairyland; deserted mines, whence come mysterious sounds of elfin miners—Buccas they call them there; wide roads frequented by demon dogs and black coaches driven by headless coachmen. A well in a parish near Penzance is still much frequented by sailors' wives who desire tidings of their absent mates. The following rhyme is said while the questioner keeps a sharp look-out upon the water:—

“Water, water, tell me truly—
Is the man that I love duly
On the earth or under the sod—
Sick or well—in the name of God?”

If the well water bubbles it is a sign that the absent husband is well and happy; if it appears puddled he is sick, and if it remains perfectly still and untroubled the questioner goes weeping away, believing she is about to be widowed. Another Cornish belief is that false witnesses never see the sun again after their perjury, everything being visible to them through a thick haze. Seven years of sorrow come to the Cornish lass who breaks a mirror, and five years' grief punishes the wanton killing of an owl.

In the south they believe that a mill will have blood every seven years, and so sacrifice a hen on the millstone to avert the loss of *human* life. Bread baked on Good Friday never gets mouldy, and all ravens are hatched on that day. In Devonshire, as well as Cornwall, the same belief obtains, and also the fear of leaving human hair about, instead of burning it, lest birds should weave it so firmly into their nests that its owner could not rise when the last summons sounded at the Judgment Day.

The farther north one goes the wilder grow the superstitions. Baby-boys should be weaned at full moon, and girls during the moon's wane, say northern mothers, if they are to grow up healthy and happy; and neither boys nor girls should be weaned during the passage of birds, or they will be restless all their lives long, neither to hold

nor to bind at autumn and spring-time, when the birds are going and coming, and so restless in their graves that no weight of earth will keep their wandering ghosts down. Has a man made a good recovery from a wasting sickness, and regained more than his old measure of strength and vigour, his northern friends say that so-and-so has lost his old soul, and had it replaced by that of a young child, or—a reindeer, save the mark! Two people must not move the cradle of a living baby, since it takes two to move a child's coffin; nor must you rock the cradle empty. Not only must you tell the bees of a death or marriage in the house, but German tradition bids you knock at the wine casks and give the news, and Westphalian peasants carry the superstition even further, giving the same tidings to the nearest oak tree.

Death superstitions in all countries are wild and strange indeed, and death omens are more frequent than any others. Among the Creek Indians, when one dies, all present in the wigwam draw breath together, and talk loudly and vehemently, thus seeking to hasten the loitering soul upon its way, as contact with it would bring immediate death among their children. New Zealanders hold that more than one soul inhabits the body. The spirit of the left eye ascends to the sky and becomes a star there; the spirit of the right eye goes to Reinga, a place beyond the sea.

Greenlanders say that the bear has four souls, and man two—a distinctly unfair division. When there is a death in the house the room doors open of themselves, and defy the tyranny of bolts and keys, and all standing water in pitchers and basins should be emptied away at the same time, lest the passing soul should drown itself in the first bewilderment of liberty. Who combs her hair after sunset will lose her memory—a curious belief among the negroes in North Carolina; and whose combings burn quickly and brightly when thrown upon the fire *in the morning* will have a short life and a merry one. The omens of an *evening* fire are not



" . . . AN ANGEL, WHO LAYS ASIDE HIS LILY CROWN
TO ROMP WITH THESE DEAD BABIES."

to be abided by, neither are one's nightly dreams, but morning dreams always come true, particularly, says an Irish friend of mine, if they are told first of all to a woman named Mary. People born in the morning cannot see ghosts or fairies, but those who are born at night are notable seers, and Good Friday children are the most gifted visionaries of all.

There is one hour in every day, says another quaint Irish fancy, when whatever you wish for will be granted you, but nobody knows what the hour is, I am sorry to say; and ghost-seers can see their spirit friends only at one hour in the day, but not even the occult know the hour, except by the appearance of the visions. There are two Irish love-charms—one for a man, and one for a woman. The man's charm is a very quaint one, and the directions for its proper achievement are delightful. "Let the man that loves her get a piece of fresh butter on a new dish that has never been used afore; let him give it to the woman his beloved in the presence of a mill, a stream, and a tree, saying softly the while to his lady—

O woman, loved by me,
O woman, dear to me,
O mayest thou give to me
Thy soul and body dear,
Amen, Amen!"

Now, all you delaying lovers, go procure yourselves a new dish and some fresh butter, and then put your ladies to the proof "in the presence of a mill, a stream, and a tree." The woman's charm is this, and with this there is no giving of butter, only a cup of water; or, indeed, the spell might be said secretly in a London drawing-room over a cup of tea. Here are the words, and pretty and tender they are!

"You for me, and I for ye,
I for you, and you for me,
And for no one other;
Your face to mine, and your heart to me,
Your hand to me, and your head to be
Turned away from all others."

Are you anxious to make a temporary conquest of an indifferent acquaintance? Give him a spray of "seven years' love" (the double-flowered yarrow). He will love you in and out of season, for seven years to the day, and not an hour after. Be kind to cats, you who desire sweet-tempered husbands when you marry. If you use them ill, it will rain and thunder at your wedding and burying.

Sicilian folk-lore is full of interest, from the Settimu, or seventh son, who has, by right of birth, the gift of healing, to the pretty and pathetic superstition of "I Morti," the "kind dead" who come from their graves every Christmas Eve and walk visibly through the midnight quiet of the streets, bringing gifts to the children of their near kindred or dear acquaintance. If one had but the grace to see them, or possessed the receipt of fern-seed, to walk invisible, one might see, may be, some gray old woman wrapped in her grave-linen, with a gaily-painted toy in her withered hands, bearing it straight to the bedside of her youngest great grandchild, or the shadowy figure of some dead lover on his way to visit his living sweetheart, carrying a gift of winter flowers for her comfort, or a young mother hurrying along, her dead baby clasped to her bosom, with only tears to leave behind her, shed on her living husband's pillow—tears that he will find wet there when he wakes to his loneliness on Christmas Day in the morning, and think they are his own. To Sicilian babies life is kind enough, and even death is gentle with them, for those of them who die unbaptized are not condemned to wander, grieving, since wander they must, but Madonna Mary sends every week-end to them an angel, who lays aside his lily-crown to romp with these dead babies, and when he leaves them gathers up in a gold chalice all the tears they have shed during the week. These he casts in handfuls into the sea, and that is why, say the Sicilians, the sea has pearls.

NORA HOPPER.

WOMEN STUDENTS AT OXFORD.

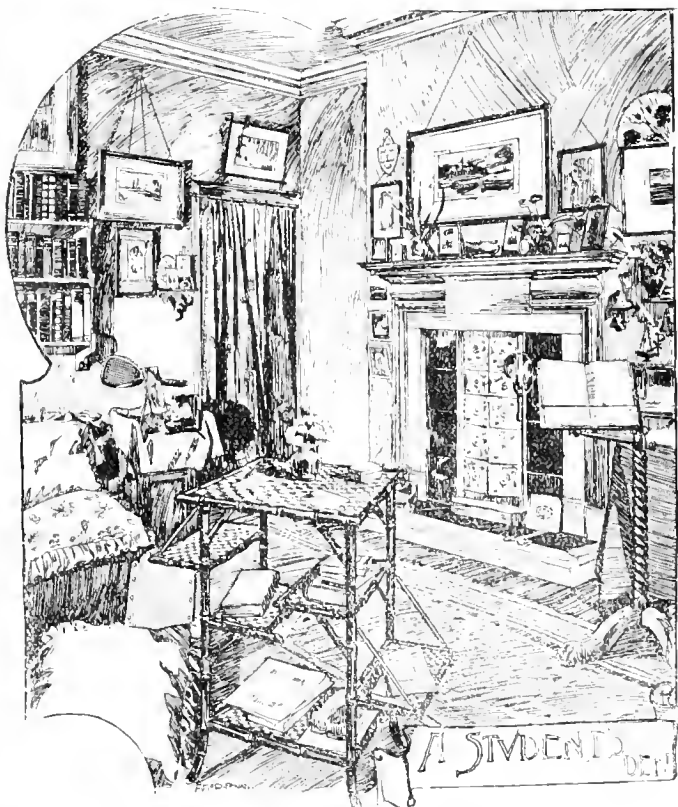
"So glad that I am old enough to be let come and take tea at Somerville Hall," added Ruskin, when he inscribed his name in the Somerville birthday book. That was many years ago. Somerville Hall was then but a small picturesque mansion hidden away amongst trees, and its present seventy students were represented by some dozen girl graduates who had begun pertinently to suggest the practicability of combining goodness and cleverness. Into old-world, cloistral Oxford the "eternal feminine" element came as a new and startling development. But the old order changes, and in the University world of to-day the woman student has found a permanent place.

It was in 1878 that the idea of founding women's colleges in Oxford was first started. In that year the Warden of Keble called together a meeting, at which it was decided that a small house in connection with the Church of England should be established for women who wished to study at Oxford. A few months later Somerville Hall was started for the same purpose, but on undenominational lines. St. Hugh's Hall is a product of later date.

Somerville Hall is now Somerville College, and wing after wing has been added to the original building to meet the growing requirements of its members. From the Woodstock Road a quaint drive, shadowy and delightful, leads up to the porch of the old hall. Through the entrance one catches a glimpse of the white dining-room, a spacious apartment, where the firelight from the

green-tiled hearth shows glints of gold and bronze among the snowy woodwork. Overhead is the drawing-room—the students' common room—where tea is partaken, magazines read, and college news discussed. There is a quiet charm about this old room. The brilliant hues of the Indian rugs have toned down into softest blues and pinks; bits of old blue Worcester are hidden away in unexpected cupboards; while over the fire place shines down Ruskin's copy of *S. Ursula, the Bud of Flowers*, who, in the lovely myth, proved the victory of her faith over all fears of death. "What truth there was in such faith I dare not say that I know; but what manner of human souls it made you may for yourself see," said the giver, as he copied *S. Ursula's* spirit face, and sent it as a possession to Somerville.

Attached to the old hall are a couple of cottages with large windows and narrow



stairs. On these last hangs a favourite college story. One of the first floor rooms was occupied by a delicate student, whose fate it was to be nursed by the presiding deity of the cottages, an old and faithful servant, who took to surveying her patient with an anxiety under which the latter writhed. "What makes you look at me in that way, Jane?" she enquired at length, exasperated beyond endurance by Jane's speculative gaze. "I was hoping as how you would get better, Miss," said the old woman respectfully, but with such an evident *arrivèe-pensée* that the victim, half-startled, half-flattered, was impelled to jerk out, "Why?" "Because it would be so awkward to get a coffin down them stairs," was the cheering response.

Between the old hall and the west buildings stretches an old-world garden, with tennis courts and shady lawn, set with tangled masses of white lilies and sweet old-fashioned flowers. In this garden have strayed the various pets whose memory has become enshrined in college tradition. Chief amongst them all was Nobby, a solemn pony, much given to fits of abstraction when steering the college phaeton through the High or the Broad. He was on terms of friendship with Jiminy, a one-legged jackdaw, who used to show her appreciation of his condescension by croaking defiance to a frigid black and white terrier named "Select Charters" by the history students. A tame snake would at times disturb the harmony of a college tea by darting his wicked little head from behind a curtain, while a couple of tortoises pursued the even tenor of their way near Nobby's paddock. Concerning these last, history says that they were purchased many years ago from a ragged vendor at the street corner. Their purchaser enquired what system of diet she was to continue. "Well, m'm," said the ragged individual, "this one he requires a little water, while as for this one he don't require nothin' at all!" His hearer received the information a little dubiously, but after

events have justified its wisdom, and the tortoises are still growing to a green old age on this somewhat meagre sustenance.

The west buildings are just opposite to the Clarendon Press. In them is to be found the busiest and most besieged spot in Somerville, the room of Miss Maitland, the lady principal. How much wise help and kindly sympathy have been bestowed in that pretty blue and amber room, past and present Somervillians know.

Here, too, is the large library, with its rows on rows of volumes. Many of these have been presented to the college by generous friends. A number of the books of Professor T. H. Green, one of the founders of Somerville, have lately been given by Mrs. Green, while Mark Pattison's books, and a great part of the library of the late Miss Amelia B. Edwards help to make up a fine collection. So fine a collection indeed, that the women from S. Phillip's Mission, who were lately entertained at Somerville, looked compassionately at the students, "who had to read all them books, pore things."

Lady Margaret Hall stands in Norham Gardens. When opened in 1879 Miss Elizabeth Wordsworth, daughter of the late Dr. Wordsworth, became lady principal, and has remained at its head till the present day. The name was suggested by Miss Wordsworth herself, in memory of that Lady Margaret Tudor, Countess of Richmond, "who was forward to secure by new foundations the alliance between religion and the studious life." In the tiny chapel attached to the Hall, the light from the stained glass windows falls full upon a cast of her recumbent figure, taken from the marble tomb in Westminster Abbey. At present the Hall is in process of extension. About four and a half acres of land adjoining the present grounds, with a private frontage down to the river, have been bought from St. John's College. A new hall for the accommodation of fifty students is meditated, but owing to want of funds only the south wing has as yet been started. The badge of the

hall is three daisies with the motto, "*Ex solo ad solem.*"

Quite close to Lady Margaret stands S. Hugh's, the smallest of the three halls. Association students who do not reside in hall are called home students, and are under the care of a principal and a committee of the Council of the Association. Those whose homes are not in Oxford can be received into a private family or at S. Kentigern's or S. Hilda's. S. Kentigern's is in the Crescent; S. Hilda's, with its gardens sloping down to the river and overlooking the towers of Merton and Magdalen, is in Cowley Place.

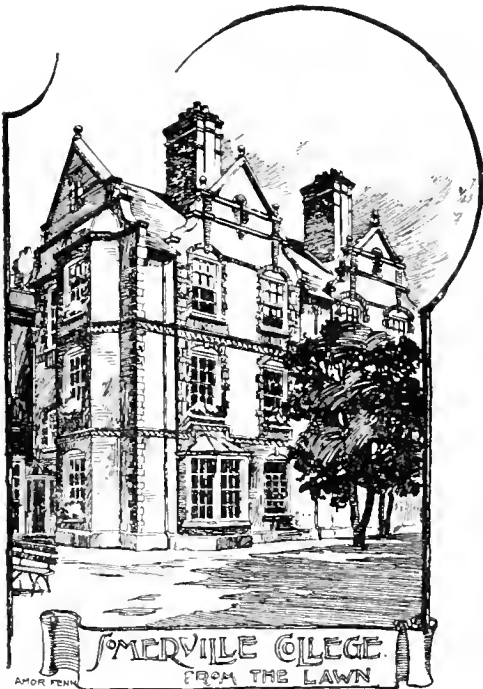
With minor points of difference the daily routine is much the same at all the colleges. The day begins with prayers and breakfast at eight o'clock. By nine every student's room has been put in order for her use. The art of changing the little low bedstead into a most charming lounge, is one in which every Oxford girl soon becomes an adept. Soft rugs in plush or cretonne are flung over the whole, and then swept up at the corners with dainty cushions, in so deft a fashion that the

inmate grows accustomed to the visitor's almost stereotyped remark, "But where is the bed?" Oxford influence is like sculpture—the art which works by force of taking away—and a student's room after three years' occupation is a very different place to the same room in its initial stages. Crude colours and promiscuous pictures are one by one banished, and what remains is an index—however poorly, however childishly expressed—of that appreciation of things beautiful which will make the after charm of her life. The long, low window-seat, the old bureau, the book-lined walls, the tea-table with its pretty china, the shield with the college coat-of-arms, the bright hockey cap or tennis racquet, are indispensable adjuncts of a college room. And yet no two rooms are alike; every photograph on the walls—from a Raphael to a Burne-Jones, every bowl of flowers, delicate roses or russet-brown creepers, bears the stamp of the owner's individuality.

The morning hours from nine to one are devoted to reading, sometimes in the student's own room, sometimes, when some rare book or old manuscript has to be consulted, in the great Bodleian Library. And at every half-hour chime from the Magdalen bells, groups of girl-graduates, armed with note book and pencil, can be seen making their way to the various colleges in which their lectures happen to be held.

Lunch is an informal meal from one to two. After lunch comes play time. And if all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, Oxford women are assuredly in no danger of approaching Jack's condition. Tennis, hockey, walking, driving, boating, and cycling fill up the hours till tea time. The tennis courts are in the college grounds; the hockey field, a comparatively recent institution, is some distance away. Terminal matches are played between the colleges, and there are yearly Inter-University matches in which the Dark Blues meet the Light Blues, and a royal battle ensues.

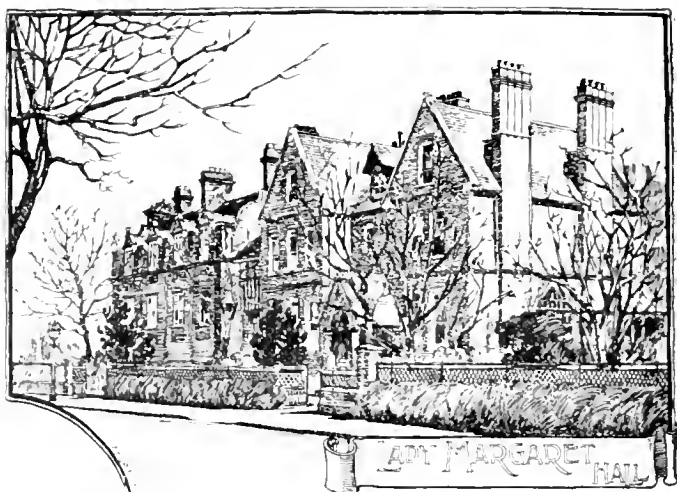
Oxford roads, in their long level stretches,



are made for cycling, and a cycling club has already been started whose members go on pleasant excursions to the villages round; to Godstow, where the ruins of fair Rosamond's Abbey stand out grey and grim, hiding amidst their shadows that secret passage whose entrance is lost in Christ Church cloisters; or to Blenheim, where a guileless fresher once asked the amazed custodian to "direct her to the battle field"! And many a long sunny afternoon is spent upon the river, in out-rigger or dingey, by those students who have passed a swimming test of fifty feet; moored among the water-lilies white and yellow, or taking a long steady pull as far as Water Eaton, with its little old Hall, where Charles I. had so narrow an escape. And for those who neither boat nor cycle there are walks along shady lanes banked with white violets, or down the meadows where the fretilaries nod their slender heads, as though they knew they were the rarest and best loved of all Oxford flowers.

Coming back to tea is always a delightful prospect, whether it is taken in the drawing-room, or in the room of a friend with the kettle singing cheerily, and the table spread out in most attractive style. Sometimes there are invitations to strawberries and cream under the apple trees; sometimes, accompanied by a chaperone, a student has a merry little tea, full of laughter and talk, in the rooms of a brother or undergraduate friend.

The two hours between tea and the first dinner bell are again given up to work, and it is generally during this time that the weekly visits of the tutors are paid. Tutorial help to students forms an essential part of the Oxford system of teaching, and tutors are appointed to direct and advise students during the whole of their college course.



Such help is invaluable. After puzzling in vain over a problem, or straying off in pursuit of some fascinating but elusive theory, it is the greatest privilege for a student to be able to talk over her difficulties with men of mark, who, just because they have been over the same ground themselves, can make allowance for her stumbles on the up-hill paths.

It is at this hour, too, at each of the three Halls in turn, that the United Halls Debating Society holds its fortnightly meeting. This is the most popular and most important of all College Societies. Every conceivable subject is discussed, from the motion "That this house would welcome the adoption by Government of a Local Option Bill" to the humbler though no less exciting theme "That fashions in dress are morally, if not socially, injurious." On so diverse a field of argument even the youngest fresher is roused to impart her views. Occasionally she flashes out into bursts of eloquence, or staggers the House with unexpected pieces of information. An indignant politician once implored her hearers to notice that to refuse the vote to married women would be "to put a premium on celibacy"! while a proposer, fighting valiantly on behalf of some favourite literary hero, proclaimed that he "had the gift of drawing tears." "A quality



shared by the meanest onion"! quoted someone audaciously, and the proposer sat down crushed, amidst a storm of laughter.

The dressing bell rings at twenty minutes to seven, and at seven the students in their pretty evening frocks assemble in the great dining-hall. The Lady Principal gives a special invitation to the high table, elsewhere places are taken indiscriminately. After dinner, twenty minutes or so are spent in the drawing-room over tea and music and the latest periodicals. Then, one by one, the little social groups break up and disperse; some to hard reading in their own rooms; some to reading in its diluted form at a College Society.

If "of the making of books there is no end" surely the same might be said with equal truth of College Societies, from the stately Scientific and Philosophic to the comparatively frivolous German Band. The Shakespeare Society meets once a fortnight; while on sunny Sunday afternoons the members of the Browning can be seen out upon the lawn. Papers are read and knotty points discussed at the Historical, while the Francais, a delightful institution, varies its more solid duties with French chocolates and

merry little French songs. Murmurs of subdued laughter from the library announce each week the meeting of the Sharp Practice. Here unhappy members are called on to deliver their views, for fully five minutes, on whatever insoluble problem the ingenuity of the House can devise. Sometimes, after a despairing "Madam and honorable Members," the luckless speaker will pause, unable to collect her ideas, and remain standing in her place a silent and miserable spectacle until the President's bell announces the five minutes' duration. Once upon a time the House was moved to express its pity, but its softer feelings were quenched at an early stage of its existence by a memorable and unlooked for snub. On the occasion referred to, an unhappy little fresher was stricken speechless and stood up in her place looking so woe-begone that the House bestowed upon her an encouraging if patronising clap. But the advance was not received in the kindly spirit in which it was meant. "Oh! I know why you're so indulgent," said the small member with much acidity, "its because I'm a woman," a proposition as unexpected as it was incontrovertible.

Ten o'clock sounds with quite a triumphant

peal from the hall clock, as though it knew that it was ushering in the pleasantest hour of the day. Almost every door is flung open; on every staircase there is a sound of hurrying feet; on every corridor a clatter of cups and saucers and a hum of voices denotes that a cocoa-party is in progress. Sometimes at these cocoa-parties the fun and laughter sobers down, and the firelight glancing on the thoughtful faces hears many a day-dream of deeds to be done in the great world which is yet so all untried. What fate holds in her hand for each girlish life has yet to be unfolded. To some will come the prince of the fairy tale; a few will march with the glamour of success around them; many must painfully spell out the old story, "*Marchons toujours; n'arrivons jamais.*" But to one and all life will be more hopeful and more purposeful through learning the lesson that Oxford has to teach, that "not by the possession of knowledge, but by the honest search after it, are the faculties of man enlarged, and in that alone consists his ever-growing perfection."

KENT CARR.

PRACTICAL JOURNALISM.

THE first piece of advice one would give to an amateur desirous of becoming a "real" journalist would be to take the matter very seriously; to face the fact that journalism is a difficult, tiresome, and ill-paid profession, and then to make the best of it.

As a profession, journalism is not more overcrowded than any other branch of work, but it suffers more from the inroads of the amateur. If any one, for instance, from fussiness, or misplaced good nature, or belief in a hobby, goes about volunteering to doctor his friends, he is not very likely to displace the professional practitioner, because few people are likely to risk unknown results by suffering an amateur's experiments. But the

amateur journalist brings his, or rather her, results in her hand as it were. She wants to write simply for "the fun of seeing herself in print"; the editor is able to see at a glance if what she offers is as good as the average; very often it is, and then if he prints it in preference to work of the same quality, for which he would have to pay, one can scarcely be surprised.

So it comes about that the journalist of average ability has a hard time of it, and, therefore, any girl about to choose a profession had better not choose journalism unless she has good reason to believe that she will be able to command more than the average ability.

Let her begin, as has been suggested, by taking her work seriously. Flippancy is the twin sister of mediocrity. Let all the more or less, generally less, funny stories one has read of journalists reviewing books they have not read, criticising plays through which they have slept and writing articles on subjects of which they were entirely ignorant, be relegated to their place in her view of things as mere light-fiction. The writer who knows all about a subject can be very much more amusing on it than one who knows nothing; even if one wishes to condemn a book one can condemn it very much more effectively for what is in it than for what is not. A light-hearted amateur may think herself very "smart" if she writes an account of some social function "chiefly from imagination," giving every one the wrong frock; but when her editor receives letters of protest from the misdescribed ladies he has a very different opinion of her ability.

The real journalist does not do these things. She must take infinite pains even in descriptions of frivolities; she must have a quick eye, a good memory, limitless patience, and no egotism, for a person wrapped up in herself makes a very dull journalist; a readiness to receive impressions must go hand in hand with the gift of expressing them.

Perhaps the first characteristic of an ideal journalist is a sense of humour. This is a

very different thing from the flippancy I have been condemning. A sense of humour knows instinctively when not to laugh; flippancy giggles tediously at the wrong time. Flippancy sees nothing in the universe but its own little joke; humour sees everything and appreciates everything at its proper value. I am emphatic on this point with a purpose; if we begin by being very flippant indeed, we think if we can drag in a weak little joke or two our article is sure of acceptance, and when our MS. is returned to us we think the editor has "no sense of humour."

Indeed, the characteristics of a thoroughly capable journalist are so numerous that a catalogue would discourage the most modest, which generally means the most promising, beginners. Many of them can be acquired; some which cannot may lie dormant in the brains of those who have the poorest opinion of themselves, or whose friends have the poorest opinion of them. All we ask from the students who may desire to try their "prentice" hands in these columns is a distinct understanding that journalism is a difficult calling, requiring, if they mean to succeed in it, the very best that is in them of thought, study, and emotion.

Perhaps the journalistic work most in request, and by natural consequence the most difficult to obtain, is book reviewing. We will say a word or two more on this subject next month, meanwhile the beginner in journalism will do well to believe that the best way to obtain this or any other work is to qualify for it; so as a first experiment let our students send in a short review of a book. Any book may be chosen, old or new, provided it is read for the first time for the special purpose of reviewing it in this column. An old favourite, or a work which the student has heard much discussed, must not be chosen. Notices must not be longer than five hundred words, and must be sent in by October 25th. The rules will be found elsewhere.

I N SCHOOL.

I.—ANTICIPATIONS.

I was overjoyed when I heard that I was to go to school. At last, I should have some one to play with, in the absence of Jack; at last, the ignominy of a nursery dinner would be wiped away, and I should dine with my equals, where distinctions of age and sex did not exist; and all elderly tyranny, except the mysterious domination of a head-mistress, would cease to exist. The head-mistress, in my mind, was going to dislike me very much at first, after the manner of head-mistresses in story-books; but later on, when I had rescued her life in a fire, or something like that, she would suddenly acknowledge my true value, and become my greatest friend and protector for the rest of my days. I had raced through several dreams of this sort, by the time I arrived at the top of the house, and rushed into the nursery to seek the manly sympathy of Jack.

But Jack's scorn was immense.

"You don't call a girl's school *school*, do you?" he said. "How poor!"

"Why not?" I asked. "I am going to take a cake, and two pots of jam, and ten shillings. If that isn't school, what is?"

"Don't care a hang about that," retorted Jack. "I know what girl's schools are; no studies of their own, no fags, no gym., no anything. Call *that* school?"

"There's a half-term holiday," I said, timidly.

"Suppose you mean an *excise*," he replied with contempt. "But of course girls never know these things. Where does your rubbishy school hang out, Becky?"

When I told him it was only on the other side of London, he scoffed more than ever.

"Then you won't even go by train?" he exclaimed. "And you won't have a river, or a bath, or a fives' court? It's going to be a rotten show, any way; and I'm jolly glad I'm not a girl."

I felt it was no use arguing any further with Jack, so I turned to the more ready sympathy of Nurse. Nurse never failed me in situations of this kind; she had an indifference to facts that made her a most valuable ally.

"School's school," she said, in her decided manner. "Boys or girls, it don't make much difference to speak of, excepting that the one is much more noisier and masterfuller than the other. Don't you tease your sister, Master Jack, or I shall go straight to your Papa."

In spite of Jack's scorn for feminine argument, and all the other unpleasant notions he had acquired at school, nursery authority still had its terrors for him; and he dropped his aggressive attitude, and even condescended to show some interest in the coming crisis of my life. I at once began to draw vivid pictures, founded partly on a slender knowledge of Miss Strangways' school, and coloured largely by my own imagination, of the glorious time I was going to have; until I had succeeded, not only in impressing Jack a little, but even in rousing his jealousy.

"Girls are jolly lucky chaps," he grumbled. "I don't have such a high old time as all that, I know. Working all day long, and two cheap half holidays a week!"

"And saints' days," I put in, carefully.

"Precious few saints," said Jack, with unconscious cynicism. "Seems to me that girls get all the fun, and none of the solid grind. Beastly hard, I call it."

"Yes," I observed, feeling that my turn had come. "For some things, I am almost glad I am not a boy."

Jack gave me a withering look.

"Oh, it's quite worth it. Don't you trouble to be cocky about that," he said, in an airy way; and my temporary triumph was over.

I was surprised to find that what appeared to me such a happy change in my fortunes merely aroused everybody's pity. All sorts of people, who had never taken the least interest in me before, suddenly sent me presents, or wrote me sympathetic letters, for

the express purpose of telling me that I should soon "get over the worst of it," and that it would not be long before the holidays came round again. Even the drawing-room visitors, of whose race Jack and I had a deeply rooted distrust, which was mainly founded on their habit of talking French before us, behaved all at once as though they were quite human, instead of being merely drawing-room visitors, who lived on afternoon tea, and never had any second-best clothes.

"So you are going to school for the first time?" said one of them, in the caressing tone that drawing-room visitors always put on when they talk to children. "Poor little mite! that's terribly sad, is it not? Do you feel dreadfully unhappy?"

"I'm going to have a cake, and ten shillings, and two pots of jam," I hastened to explain.

But the drawing-room visitor did not mean to admit that any alleviation of my situation was possible; and I began to think, in time, that everybody must be right, and that I had made an absurd mistake in thinking that I was happy at all.

"Hullo! Why I thought you were so beastly glad," said Jack when he discovered me in tears, on the nursery floor, the day before the term began.

"So I was," I said, mournfully. "But I'm not, now. I'm m-miserable. So would you be, if you were going to a horrid strict school, with horrid strict rules, and horrid strict mistresses and people, and nothing but girls to play with. It's—it's frightening!"

To do Jack justice, he could be very sympathetic sometimes, if I was really in trouble, and no one was listening.

"It must be rather awful," he admitted. "Just imagine, all girls! You bet they play cricket with a soft ball, too—so poor! Perhaps they don't play at all, though; and if they did, they would be 'leg before' all the time, wouldn't they? Girls are always 'leg before'; it's their silly skirts or something. Never mind, Becky! It mayn't be so bad, after all; and you will have *me* in the

holidays, don't you know. Besides, you are a girl yourself, aren't you?"

I had to own sorrowfully that this was the case, but as it had always been my greatest trouble, it was not calculated to raise my spirits now; and Jack hastily corrected himself, and said that of course I couldn't help it, if I was, and that nobody would know it if it came to being longstop, which made me prouder than anything else he could possibly have said.

When the great day came at last, I drove to school with mother, in the lowest depths of depression. Even the knowledge of the cake that was packed in the crown of my Sunday hat, and the two pots of jam that were wedged among my stockings, and the ten shillings that lay in my new purse, together with three hot pennies from Jack's pocket, did not bring me courage or consolation when I found myself in a crowded drawing-room, with no occupation but to try and distinguish the dread head-mistress from her visitors. I believe mother shook hands with someone; and two or three people kissed me, among them a voluble dark lady, who talked French, without reminding me of our drawing-room visitors, and then went off to bewilder some one else in the same manner. But I was too shy to notice much, and I found myself, presently, on a couch in the middle of the room, with a sea of other mothers and other daughters all round me. It was very hot, and very dismal, and I began to feel sleepy, as well as neglected.

"Dear me, how sorry I feel for you poor children who have never been to school before!" said some one, who had just dropped into the seat beside me. The voice had so much feeling in it, that I turned as to a comrade, and was surprised to find quite a grown-up person, who was smiling at me, just as though she had known me all my life. She had none of the patronising ways of the ordinary grown-up person, however, and I smiled back at her and felt we were friends.

"It wouldn't be so bad," I said, "if *only*

they were not all girls. Don't you call it rather a bore?"

"That is only because you have always had boys to play with," said the strange lady. "Perhaps, when you get used to girls, you will find that they are just as nice in their own way. And after all, your brothers are only home in the holidays, are they?"

Now whatever made her guess that I had been used to boys? But she was evidently not one of those stupid people who never seem to know anything that is really important, and ask interminable questions, so I grew quite confidential.

"I have only one brother," I explained. "but we are great chums, don't you know. And then, it isn't only the girls I mind, it's the head-mistress. She is going to misunderstand me, you see; and then she will dislike me very much, at least, until something dreadful happens, like a fire, or perhaps a burglary. And it isn't pleasant to be disliked very much by anyone, is it? And, you see, it may be months before there is a fire."

"I see," said my friend, sympathetically. "But why will she cease to dislike you when there is a fire? I am afraid I don't *quite* understand."

"Oh," I said, with enthusiasm, "of course, I shall rush into the heat of the flames, just where the wall is going to fall in with a crash and every one else is too frightened to go, and the head-mistress will be there sound asleep, and the next moment she is going to be smothered up! Only, *I* shall save her life, and she will like me for ever after. You couldn't very well go on disliking any one, after she had saved your life, could you?"

"It would be difficult," said the strange lady. "But I should very much like to meet this terrible head-mistress, who is going to dislike you so much. Can you tell me if she is in the room?"

"She must be somewhere about," I replied, sadly, "because mother came on purpose to put me in her charge. I think it must be that awful old lady over there, with spectacles,

Don't you think she looks head-mistressy?"

"I should hardly think so," said my companion, doubtfully. "A head-mistress would not wear a bonnet in her own house, would she?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. You never know what a head-mistress might do," I said, emphatically. "Besides, there isn't any one in the room without a bonnet, except you."

"Now I come to think of it," said the strange lady, smiling: "there certainly isn't."

"I know it isn't polite to ask questions," I went on; "but I do *so* want to know why you haven't got a bonnet on. Are you staying in the house, or anything?"

"Well, yes," she replied, smiling still more. "I have been staying here a good long time."

"Oh," I said, with awe in my voice. "As long as Miss Strangways?"

"Just about as long as Miss Strangways," she said, after appearing to reflect for an instant. I was burning to know why she had been there so long, but the stern visage of Nurse, the inventor of manners, rose in my mind, and I restrained the impulse to ask her another question.

"I'm just frightfully glad you are here," I said, instead. "Perhaps, I shall see you again?"

"There is no doubt about that," said the strange lady.

"And if the head-mistress is very unkind to me, you will be nice to me when she isn't looking?" I pursued, anxiously. For, in the story-books, the poor, persecuted, misjudged child always had one champion in the camp of the enemy.

"It won't be very easy," she said, gravely. "But I will see what I can do."

My spirits began to rise. Everything was turning out in accordance with all the known canons of fiction. Nothing was wanting, now, except the fire and the head-mistress.

"I am not a bit sorry I have come to school, after all," I exclaimed.

"That's right," said my friend. And I wondered why she looked so pleased.

Presently, mother came to bid me good-bye. In obedience to tradition, I ought to have sobbed in her arms, and refused to be comforted. But I did nothing of the sort.

"I'm awfully glad I'm here," I told her, cheerfully. "I think school is an immensely jolly place. And, oh, mother, there is a perfectly splendid lady over there, who is staying in the house, too, and she is going to be nice to me when the head-mistress isn't looking. She promised me she would. Isn't that beautiful?"

Just then, my new friend came up to shake hands with mother.

"You will look after my little girl, won't you, dear Miss Strangways?" said my mother, fervently.

"I am afraid," said the head-mistress, smiling, "that we shall have to wait until there is a fire."

EVELYN SHARP.

VILLANELLE.

If Love be dead,

O Man, no longer mourn, but rest;

Tend Hope instead.

Drape her in red

Wreathe ruddy roses round her breast,

If Love be dead.

Hath thine heart bled

Hearing the news at length confest?

Tend Hope instead.

Thy sad soul spread

Before her, waiting to be blest,

If Love be dead.

Lift up thine head,

Be not by sorrow so opprest;

Tend Hope instead.

Nor be it said:

"He loved his own wild will the best."

If Love be dead

Tend Hope instead.

RUTH YOUNG.



ON SHYNESS.

"I NEVER know what to say to the man who takes me in to dinner," said the debutante.

"You can always take refuge in saying nothing," said the girl of three seasons.

"But I am so afraid of being thought stupid," pleaded the debutante.

"Don't you worry yourself about that, Lily," said her mother consolingly. "Depend upon it, if there is a long silent pause the man is far too busy wondering what he can say himself to have time to think about you. Men are far shyer than women as a rule, if the women only knew it."

"I believe that now," said the bride, "but it took me a long while to learn it. I was horribly shy the first time I met Tom, when I went to dinner with him at Lady Marks', and I racked my brains and wrinkled my eyebrows trying to think of something quite bright and original to say to him, never guessing for a moment that he was doing just the same, till at last we both came out with the same question. 'Have you been to any theatres lately?' and I was so startled that I said: 'Oh, is that the only thing you could think of, too?' and didn't feel shy any more directly I knew how shy he was. Now when he is introduced to any strange girl I can always watch him stirring up his brains to find a new idea until he reaches the stage of giving up originality in despair, and says: 'Have you been to any theatres lately?'"

"Molly has given us the key of the situation," said the chaperone, "in saying that

she ceased to feel shy the moment she realised her companion's shyness. But that's often a little difficult; one's own always seems so much more important. I remember a sweet deaf child, who was absolutely the best bred person I ever met in my life. She had been taught to speak by the oral method: that is to say, she knew what people were saying by the movements of their lips, and knew how to move her own to produce the words she wanted without herself hearing them. She was once staying in a country house with her parents. They were the first of the house party to arrive, so as the family was small and contained no children, she dined with her elders, and it fell to the son of the house to take her down. She told me the story in her pretty ingenious way. 'I thought it would make him so uncomfortable to try to talk to a deaf girl when he didn't know the way, that I thought I would begin to talk to show him. So I said: 'What are you thinking of?' and he looked surprised, and said, 'I am thinking of my dinner,' and I said, 'Are you afraid it will be a bad dinner that you look so sad?' and he said, 'Why, you can talk quite well,' and then we talked.'"

"But we couldn't all begin with quite so direct a question as that girl's," said cousin Mary, "because we have not her exceptional excuse."

"But when you come to think of it," continued the chaperone, "that is just exactly what we all mean by our first question to a new acquaintance, however we put it. 'Have you been to the theatre lately?' 'Have you read *The New Comet*?' 'Do you admire Mrs. So-and-so?' All really mean the

same thing—that is, ‘What do you think?’ ‘What are you like?’ ‘Are you going to like me?’ ‘and am I going to like you?’ One commonplace will do almost as well as another to give our companion a chance of showing what he or she is like.”

“When I come out I shall always begin by saying, ‘please begin to talk; I am as shy as you are,’” said the younger sister.

“Which is exactly what the man means when he says, ‘Have you read *The New Convent*?’” said her brother.

“But if you haven’t,” said the debutante, “you can only say no, and there’s an end of that subject.”

“Not at all,” said cousin Mary. “Don’t you see, he wouldn’t have asked you if he had not read it himself. You can ask him what it is about and if he likes it, and in a little while you will be changing opinions quite naturally.”

“But I never have any opinions,” the debutante replied mournfully. “I like a book, or I don’t like it; it makes me feel sad, or angry, or dull, but that is not having an opinion. I might have cried over a book all the morning, and yet if anyone asked me at dinner-time what I thought of it I should have to say, ‘I don’t know.’”

“That is natural enough,” said the bride; “to talk easily and naturally is an art just as much as dancing or singing. It comes easiest to those who have the gift for it, but everyone needs training and practise; our brain needs exercise just as much as our bodies if it is to do its work quickly and gracefully. One can get into a habit of having an opinion at a moment’s notice. I don’t mean a solemn serious opinion that one would argue about, but a little unimportant opinion, good enough for conversational purposes.”

“But how are you to get your practise?” asked the brother. “It is all very well for you—you have Tom always at hand. Is poor Lily to talk all day so as to have got into the way of it by dinner-time?”

“The best brain exercise I know,” said the

chaperone, “is reading the right sort of book. I don’t mean what are generally known as ‘improving works,’ but witty conversational novels. Not that one may quote from them or copy them, of course, but because they get one into the habit of seeing the point of a well-expressed sentence on the instant, and putting one’s answer into the few words which express it best. Charles Lever’s later works are the best conversational exercises I know. After reading ‘Lord Kilgobbin,’ for instance, the dullest person would be better able to see the point of what was said to her, and so readier to give the right answer to it.”

“I’ll read ‘Lord Kilgobbin’ directly I go home,” cried the debutante, “and then come and talk to you again, if I may, Mrs. Lea, and you will tell me if it has improved my conversation at all.”

“Oh, may I, too?” pleaded the engaged girl. “I need such a lot of improvement. I can talk enough to the people I know very well, but Dick is sometimes disappointed that I make such a bad impression on strangers. I need a little of that conversational exercise you speak of dreadfully.”

“You may come as often as you like,” said the chaperone, “all of you, and we will talk about new books and old ones, and discuss whatever occurs to us, serious subjects as well as trivial ones. You elder girls must come, too, and help the children with your experiences.”

“But don’t let them get too clever,” cried the brother, alarmed. “After all, one would rather go down to dinner with a dull girl than a *riky* one.”

“Don’t be alarmed, Frank,” replied the chaperone, “you shall come too, and warn us if ever our opinions grow too violent for social purposes.”

“When shall we come?” asked all the girls.

“Let us say this day next month,” said the chaperone.

NORA VYNNE.

A TALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

ARE LADY-HELPS SATISFACTORY?

IN theory, the lady-help is perfection; in reality, she is not altogether satisfactory. Sometimes this is the fault of the lady-help herself, who is but human, sometimes it is due to the mistress, who is also only human, or, occasionally, inhuman. To be waited upon by a lady, one who is able to identify herself with and understand the feelings and wishes of her mistress, also a lady, should be far more pleasing and comfortable than the service of a person of inferior tastes and aims, unable to appreciate the little refinements dear to the heart of every lady. The lady-help should be almost as the elder daughter of her mistress, doing all she can for the welfare of the family in which she finds her home. In return she is surely entitled to much consideration, a fair remuneration, and as many pleasures as her mistress is able to afford her. In the majority of cases a young girl starts in life as a lady-help totally untrained and unprepared for the position and work she undertakes, little understanding what will be expected of her. She thinks she has had some experience at home among her brothers and sisters, helping her mother, but generally such experience amounts to nothing, for at home under her mother's eye excuses are often accepted, allowances made, and duties remitted, as one cannot expect them to be in the house of a stranger, where one works for money, not love. Then again, a girl often has it impressed upon her when starting out into the world that she must never forget that her father was a gentleman, and she must not do anything unladylike, thereby lowering the family standard. Of course this is a very proper statement to a certain extent, and a very excellent maxim to bear in mind, but the young person of limited experience brings it down to mere trifling incidents, such as the mending of stockings, which is sometimes considered work unfit for a lady's fingers. One is inclined to forget that no honest work is derogatory to birth unless it be badly done. The lady-help is too much inclined to say, "I did not come here as sewing-maid," or, "You did not engage me as nurse," when asked to do anything which she considers undignified. If lady-helps would think less of themselves and their rights, and if mistresses would give good wages and not be too exacting in their demands upon the temper and patience of their dependents, perhaps the scheme might work more satisfactorily.

CONSTANCE BELLHOUSE.

AFTER what we have heard, read, and also, we can say, experienced of the present-day servants, I, for one, should say lady-helps are decidedly satisfactory, and in many cases an unmitigated blessing, especially for those who find housekeeping, with its innumerable trials of patience and common sense, no bed of roses. In the first place place the majority of them have been carefully brought up, and taught how to do things properly. Their intellect has been awakened by their school discipline, consequently they find no difficulty in acquiring a new study, even if that study is domestic work, and coming from refined homes, they appreciate the decorative art, which every lady, be her income great or small, likes to indulge to show her individual taste, and so we hear of fewer accidents amongst the choice ornaments of the drawing-room when the duster is called into acquisition. Mistresses object to teaching their servants; some may possess almost superhuman teaching powers, but they cannot create

intelligent faculties where the seed has never been sown, and, generally speaking, as soon as we have taught our servants they leave us, for we all know the story of the cook, who, after having her cooking lessons paid by her mistress, wished to leave on the grounds that she could not undertake the new cooking for the old wages. Look at another side of the question, the delivering or the receiving of messages. How often have we been annoyed to find from want of forethought, but oftener on account of some chance company in the kitchen, say the coming of the milkman or the butcher, our messages have either been forgotten or misdelivered. Now with a lady-help this is different; pride keeps her from familiarity with her inferiors, and thus an endless amount of gossip is stopped. We must not overlook the comfort there is when a temporary ailment overtakes the mistress; instead of knowing whilst she is ill things will be going wrong, and her nerves liable at any moment to be shaken by the banging of doors and loud voices, which announce the fact that she is away, there are gentle footsteps, kind attention, and better still, sympathy, and all the time we know that our interests are served with conscientious exactitude.

AGNES M. PRICE.

THE lady-help, a palliative of the unemployed problem and the servant difficulty, is not, I think, an unmixed success. She is an anomaly in the sphere which is normal to the ordinary domestic, and which, in unconscious recognition of the "fitness of things," the latter calls "her kitchen." The lady-help, usually the daughter of a professional man whose death has thrown her homeless upon the world, has had little education or training. Whatever the reason, the fact remains that these women are driven, sometimes late in life, to undertake menial work for which they are unfitted. As affecting comparatively poor people, I may mention one or two obvious objections to this radical change in our domestic economy. The provision of a separate sitting-room (with fire in winter) for the lady-help would be a tax on slender resources; while, if treated as one of the family, the constant presence of a stranger would be irksome and destructive of family privacy; it might also conceivably lead to unpleasant complications. Again, while a considerate employer would feel bound to provide a deputy for the rougher and dirtier work, many families can barely afford *one* help, gentle or simple, the lady of the house herself acting as head cook, nurse, and upper housemaid. That she is scheduled, in census papers, as "unoccupied" is, of course, merely a flight of poetic fancy. This tendency to cast a glamour of unreality over women's work, making it, like virtue, its own reward, is confined almost exclusively to men, possibly because they alone can achieve the aloneness necessary to get the subject into perspective. We owe to a man, also, the alliterative idealisation of women's work, which has become a euphemism for domestic service. No amount of "making believe" will solve the very practical domestic service problem: the work is hard, monotonous, and continuous, but it is *absolutely indispensable*. To argue, intentionally even, that domestic "drudgery" is, *per se*, more "divine" than other drudgery is mere affectation! Women are no more born cooks and housemaids than men are born plumbers. Indeed, the vocations for which we must be born, not made, are happily few, and precisely those most easily dispensed with. Domestic servants must be taught their trade, and fitted for responsibility before assuming it. Not, as too often happens, picking up their education at the expense of the employer, who is paying for skilled labour.

MARY AULD.

ATALANTA CLUB.

Subject for September: "Are artificial aids to beauty permissible?" Papers must not exceed more than *two hundred and fifty words*, and must be sent in on or before October 25th. Prizes of five shillings will be awarded to each of the best four papers, which will be published in the body of the Magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

Describe a humorous incident of district visiting. Give a critical estimate of the character of Richard II. Write an original villanelle (example given on page 52). Essays must not exceed 500 words. All papers must be sent in on or before October 25th. Members may only enter for one of these subjects. Subject for the School of Journalism will be found on page 49.

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (SEPT.).

I.

1. Ecclesiastes, Chap. III. By the Earl of Surrey.
2. It means *slippery*. The word was so used to the end of the 16th century.

II.

1. "Foreshadowings" (Theodore Watts).
2. "The world's death-night" (James C. Wood).
3. "The heart's sacredness" (Archbishop Trench).

III.

Pier delle Vigne, Secretary of State to Frederick II. of Sicily.

IV.

1. From Morley's "Ballets," 1595.
2. Sir Walter Raleigh.
3. From the "Tea-table Miscellany"; Allan Ramsay, but he 'does not know who was the author.

V.

1. An ancient idea, not unknown to the Greeks, who represent the young Nereides, one of the cupids, as living in shells on the shore of the Red Sea.
2. The place where the Whango, or river of Tibet, rises, and where there are more than a hundred springs, which sparkle like stars.

VI.

1. Coleridge.
2. The first description is that of Dorothy Wordsworth—the second, Hazlitt.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR OCTOBER.

I.

1. What is the signification of "*Nixet cano*"?
2. Who are meant by the "People of the Rock"?

II.

1. Who is it says that "Poets are scarcely thought freemen of their company, without paying some duties, or obliging themselves to be true to love?"
2. Where was the birth place of Milton?
3. Who wrote the verses on the lap dog?

III.

Whose are the following quotations?

1. "What spirit is this that cometh from afar,
Making the household tender with a cry
That blends the mystery of earth and sky
The blind mute visions of a new-lit star,
The unlanguage'd visions of a tolded rose?"
2. "A cloud lay cradled near the setting sun,
A gleam of crimson tinged its braided snow;
Long had I watched the glory moving on
O'er the still radiance of the lake below."

IV.

Give authors of quotations.

1. "Shall man of frail fruition boast?
Shall life be counted dear,
Oft but a moment, and at most,
A momentary year?"
2. "Beneath our feet and o'er our head
Is equal warning given;
Beneath us lie the countless dead,
Above us is the heaven."

V.

1. Who is supposed to have written the lines beginning
"Sir John he got him an ambling nag,"
2. What is meant by the term "haedye roll"?

VI.

Give authors of quotations.

1. "How happy is he born or taught,
That serveth not another's will;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And single truth his highest skill."
2. "There was a lord of worthy fame,
And a hunting he would ride,
Attended by a noble traine
Of gentrye by his side."



MR. ROBERT INGERSOLL took a pinch of snuff from the box formally extended to him by Sir George Egerton. There were Watteau shepherds and shepherdesses on the lid of the box, who seemed to stay the progress of their slow-stepping minuet in order to somewhat reproachfully observe that Mr. Ingersoll did not wear powder. As the odour of the scented rappee diffused itself over the apartment, Sir George inhaled a pinch of the titillating compound in his turn, tapped an outstretched forefinger solemnly on the box, and restored it to a capacious pocket in the side of his long coat.

"I faith, Ingersoll," he said, rising from his chair with the courtly grace of the old school. "I faith, Ingersoll, though the lad daren't look a wench in the face, 'tis time he were wed. The wine is with you. A bumper to our nephew, though I know not what has come over the lads of the present generation. The maudlin milksops seem to think a pretty girl is to be passed by on the other side as if she carried a plague in her bright eyes. 'Twas not so when we were both about town in the 'twenties.' And yet, Ingersoll, for all our gaiety we have come to this." He waved a white hand deprecatingly round the apartment.

"This," my old friend!" said the other, bowing as he emptied his glass. "Yes, we have come to 'this.' When I look round on so many of our friends tossing about the sea of matrimony, dearly as I admire t'other sex in the abstract, 'pon my faith, 'this' has its advantages. No peevish faces, no craving for satins and sarsenets, silks and laces, no

"I pray you, spouse, don't linger in your club but call for me at Lady Jane's at twelve."

"No clamouring as to who shall have the equipage," said Sir George, with a chuckle. "No burdening one with family dinners, and yawning over morning prayers at eight. No meeting one's tenants at the annual ball and dancing with farmer's dames who do protest they're vastly overcome at such an honour. In short, we have both remained free, jolly dogs that we are, without a care in the world."

"Without a care in the world," said Ingersoll.

To prove how free from care they were, both old gentlemen sighed dismally.

"But, for all that, the young dog our nephew must marry, or the estates go to another branch of the family," continued Sir George.

"Yes," said Ingersoll; "he must marry. You remember forty years ago we both courted Mistress Mary Blane, and she would have none of us. She said our families were not good enough to mate with one of her high lineage. A lovely dame, but too proud of her pedigree."

"A lack of wisdom on her part, my friend. It would have afforded me satisfaction if you had succeeded where I had failed."

Ingersoll bowed again, and looked reminiscently at his host. "Where you did not succeed I could not have presumed to do otherwise."

"Nay, nay, old friend," the other said, pressing his hand kindly on Ingersoll's shoulder. "We set our hearts upon winning her, and after our disappointment the world

lost its savour. She married a long-pedigreed merchant, who failed. Failed honourably. I heard that she was destitute, that her pride of birth made her refuse all offers of help from my overstocked purse. An obstinate jade and proud. I know not whether she be living or dead."

"Something tells me she is still alive," said Ingersoll. "I should like to meet her again and make provision for her wants. She may have a daughter like her, who would be a comfort to us in our old age."

"She might, my friend, but Nature rarely produces two goddesses in a century. Mistress Mary Blane's deportment was superb. Such an one were well fitted to mate with our nephew, Arthur Ensleigh, could she be found."

"'Tis more than possible, my friend, that so good-looking a cockerel should wed some well-dowered damsel, of ancient family."

"Versed in the law of housewives——"

"Skilled in the etiquette of the chase and the ballroom——"

"Proud with the proper pride of race——"

"Beautiful——"

"And moderately complaisant."

"Hum, yes. But where is this paragon to be found?" continued Ingersoll, musingly. "Sir Wilfred Chase's heiress is already bespoken, the Meynell girls are abroad, the Farquharsons in retirement. Lady Letty Lindon would do passing well. She is nineteen, gentle, sweet, but ——"

"Plain," said the other. "I' faith, one can't have everything. Lady Letty it shall be. I bade the young dog come hither this evening to acquaint himself with our wishes." And the two old autocrats once more pledged each other.

But when young Mr. Arthur Ensleigh himself ruffled in a couple of hours later, there was an animated discussion. He was a good-looking lad, who had cast to the winds all formality, and substituted therefor an easy dignity of his own, which became him well. His blue eyes were filled with merriment, and he walked with the assured air of

a man who knows that he is not dependent on the whims of others for daily bread. The two old gentlemen saluted him formally as he bowed and waited for an invitation to be seated.

"A bumper, Arthur!" said Sir George.

"Nay, uncle," said the young fellow. "I'm not one of your three-bottle men who couch themselves beneath the mahogany and snore away the night"; and he threw himself back in his chair with an air of peevish melancholy which did not escape Mr. Ingersoll's notice.

"What is it, nephew?" he asked. "Your merriment has soon faded away. Cards packed? Dice not worth the throwing? Or are you affected by the new melancholy which hath crept over the land?"

The young man laughed. "Do I look as if Master Shakespeare's green and yellow fiends had possessed me? Nay, not I; but there comes a time in the life of man, especially after he has done the *grand tour*, when he is inclined to taste the sweets of domesticity."

He pushed the bottle somewhat peevishly away from him and gazed pensively into the fire.

"In truth," said Sir George, "this Narcissus is in love with his own shadow. Arthur, we must get you a wife. A toast! A toast! I'll name her!"

The young man sprang to his feet, his melancholy disappearing with magic speed. "A toast! a toast!" he cried, with sparkling eyes. "A toast! To the future Mistress Ensleigh! No heelsaps, I pray you."

The three solemnly drank the toast, and turned their glasses upside down. Moved by a sudden impulse, young Ensleigh flung his into the fireplace. "It shall never be profaned by one less worthy," he said. "The future Mistress Ensleigh! I see her now."

"Young dog!" said Sir George, well pleased.

"She is tall," resumed Ensleigh.

"Of a comely cast of countenance," said Sir George.

"Right. Tresses of raven black, most sweet eyes of——"

"Eh?" enquired Ingersoll.

"The lad raves," said Sir George; "and, as for her eyes, methinks one hath a slight cast in it."

"Fie, uncles. A cast! But then you have never seen her."

"Never seen her!" echoed Ingersoll. "Why, I have known her since childhood, and have ever thought her somewhat dumpy in stature."

The young fellow looked doubtfully from one to the other. Then he glanced meaningly at the bottles on the table. Could these grave and reverend seigniors, his guardians, have taken too much Burgundy? No; their eyes were clear; they followed not the roystering fashions of the times. "Dumpy!" he echoed wrathfully. "She is tall and lithe as a young willow, hath rosy cheeks, the hue whereof mingleth cunningly with her curd-white skin. There is not a lady at the court to compare with her for beauteous grace."

Sir George took another pinch of snuff. "Love is blind indeed," he said, "when you can see all these charms in Lady Letty."

"Lady Letty!" cried the youth, aghast. "Lady Letty who?"

"Lady Letty Lindon," replied Sir George. "My lord of Duleston's daughter?"

"Precisely."

The young fellow burst into convulsive merriment. "And so, my good uncles, this is the bride you have chosen for me. With all due deference," he bowed to them, "I prefer to select one for myself."

"Remember," blandly said Sir George, "you will not attain your majority for another year. We are not accustomed to have our will disputed."

"In truth, my good uncles," said the young fellow seriously, "I crave your pardon. I will marry Lady Letty (provided she will have me) on one condition. Is't agreed?"

They bowed.

"Well, then, to-morrow morning get you

to horse with me, and we will ride to the fair village of Hendon, where my lady dwells." He laughed again. "On second thoughts, good uncles, you will also promise not to rival me with the lady. If you like her not, then will I go down on my marrow-bones to Lady Letty and be haled to the altar and tied up in leading-strings for the rest of my natural days. Give you good even, uncles. Order your horses at eight, and fare forth with me into the spring weather."

The two old gentlemen bowed, although they liked not to ride abroad in the early dawn. They were both subject to rheumatism, and loved to linger abed till noon ere taking their dish of chocolate. But the impetuosity of youth was too much for them. They bowed again to their headstrong ward, and gave the required promise.

Ensleigh looked at them quizzically as he reached the threshold. They were both handsome men, though old. "If you were a score of years less, gentlemen," he said, "I



"A TOAST, A TOAST."

dare not make the test. You are taller than I, broader in the shoulder. An you like not the maid, I wed the Lady Letty. An you like her, uncles, you will give me your blessing, and I wed it the fair May weather. Is't so?"

They bowed. Each loved the youngster, but each was obstinate. The compliment to their personal appearance was well-timed. They felt that but for the mere accident of age, Master Ensleigh would have hesitated before allowing two such gallant blades to see the lady of his choice.

The young fellow went out, leaving the two old gentlemen to sit by the spacious hearth, and see the fair face of Mistress Mary Blane in its dying embers.

CHAPTER II.

The next morning Mr. Arthur Ensleigh and the old beaux met ere the world was fairly aired. These two gentlemen courteously endeavoured to dissemble their chagrin at such a reversal of their usual habits. Owing to the unwonted hour their morning chocolate had lost its savour. They crawled rheumatically forth and stood on the steps of the mansion which they shared in common, staring disconsolately at the horses, as the sleek, well-groomed beasts playfully flung up their heels and sniffed the morning breeze. An arm-chair and the latest coffee-house sheet appealed to them far more strongly than this romantic riding forth to the savage wilds of Hendon, a village beautiful in itself doubtless, but which had figured in many a Bow Street Runner's record as the haunt of highwaymen whose "stand and deliver" admitted of scant argument. The old gentlemen were unquestionably brave; but they had passed the age when a man sheathes his sword in an opponent for mere practice sake. They preferred pistols, provided that overnight potations had not unsteadied their hands. At a sign, therefore, the valets brought forth deadly weapons and placed them in the holsters. "Blue Ruin," Sir George's old bay

roadster, danced about like a colt; whilst Mr. Ingersoll's blood black "Telemachus" stood decidedly in need of a mentor, for, not content with playfully chewing the ear of his groom, he planted a sturdy hoof in the waistcoat of a respectable cit who stood hard by watching the preparations for departure. That rollicking young blade, Arthur Ensleigh, was dressed with unusual care, and his grey Arab, a somewhat weedy-looking beast when compared with the sturdy proportions of "Telemachus," shone satin-skinned and wide-nostrilled in the morning sun, conscious of a new bridle and silver stirrups.

After sundry misadventures, the old beaux were safely mounted. Once in the saddle, the habits of a lifetime asserted themselves; they sat erect, not without painful cricks in the back, and various rheumatic twinges lower down; but the fresh, sweet morning air, and the maypoles engarlanded with flowers, dissipated their melancholy as the sun pierces a morning mist. They rode hand on hip, with gallant air, or doffed their beavers courteously to all the country maids who came tripping townwards from Cricklewood's green heights.

The cavalcade halted for an hour's rest at an ancient hostelry, the "Welsh Harp," near the little village of Hendon. Ensleigh, scorning to be a laggard in love, galloped off to catch a glimpse of his betrothed. Before the old gentlemen had finished their bottle of Burgundy a-piece, he was back again on his fleet-footed Arab, urging them to mount anew ere their sinews stiffened with unwonted exercise.

When Sir George and Mr. Ingersoll were once more prevailed upon to take horse, they had lost their former debonair look. They were sleepy and disinclined to exert themselves. Sir George even entwined his hand in his horse's mane and took a surreptitious nap as they climbed slowly up Hendon hill, until the sight of a fine old Elizabethan mansion, half-hidden amid leafy green trees roused him from his torpor. "The lad is playing a trick upon us," he said to Ingersoll.

"No poor girl could live in yonder mansion unless she were a servant, and the rogue has too much respect for us to fall in love with a serving wench."

But Ensleigh kept straight on past the lodge-gate of this stately manor house. As they continued their ride, Sir George caught a glimpse of an old lady who sat outside in the little verandah of her cottage, enjoying the sweet May sunshine. There was an air of pride and vigour about her still; and she tapped her gold-headed cane on the ground with the air of one who defied contradiction. Mr. Ingersoll, too, saw the old lady, and noticed that her hair was jet black. Something in the poise of the head awakened old memories. He turned uneasily in the saddle, but a bend in the lane shut out the little cottage, and the next moment he was toiling painfully up another steep hill trying to overcome the burden of his years. "Odds life, man" he said, somewhat testily, to Ensleigh. "Have we much further to go on this wild-geese quest? I must confess to feeling somewhat fatigued."

"A little way, only," laughed Ensleigh. "What say you to another brief halt here? 'Tis the village school; that flowering chestnut, with the bees humming round it, hath a most inviting air. There are chairs, too."

Sir George looked at the blossoming chestnut, and slowly swung himself from his saddle. He, too, was tired, but would not admit it.

"'Tis a prodigious view. Let us halt awhile and enjoy it," he said, straightening his back and flinging "Blue Ruin's" reins to his man. Ensleigh had already dismounted. "Be seated, I pray you, uncles," he entreated with a certain dash of mischief in his tone. "Here, where I have had these chairs placed, you can see the village children conning their tasks, and"—he hesitated a moment—"the village schoolmistress at her desk."

For a few minutes the old gentlemen were far too much fatigued, sleepy, and cross to take any interest in the children. They luxuriously stretched out their legs by the

honeysuckle-covered porch and flung aside the burden of their years. This wild-geese chase had been very fatiguing so far; but they promised themselves a good dinner at the old hostelry of "The Welsh Harp," and then back to town again, after a nap, by easy stages. The girl they had come to see must surely be somewhere in the neighbourhood, or their nephew would not have dragged them so far.

Sir George was the first to notice the schoolmistress, as she sat at her desk. She had raven hair, dark eyes, and a most exquisite complexion. He felt sure that her hand and foot were more than passable. When she rose to address the children, something in the carriage of the young girl's tall, slim figure awakened his interest. She dismissed the children with a few gentle words, then turned to descend from the little dais on which the desk was placed.



"SHE STOPPED IRRESOLUTELY."

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.

As she did so, Sir George felt a hand clutch his arm, and a low groan issued from Ingersoll's lips. "Mary Blane! Mary Blane!" he cried bewilderedly. Then, turning fiercely to his nephew, "What trick is this? Am I mad, or dreaming?"

The girl slowly came towards them, with a heightened colour on her pretty face. When she saw Ensleigh she stopped irresolutely until he stepped forward, bowed with courtly politeness, and drew her arm within his own. "Uncles," quoth he, "allow me to have the honour of presenting you to the daughter of your old friend, Mistress Mary Blane."

Sir George stared at her bewilderedly. "It is Mary Blane," he said. "Yet I am an old man. The years have stood still with her."

Ingersoll came forward and kissed the pretty, blushing girl.

"For your mother's sake," he said gravely. "Your mother's daughter hath an old claim to satisfy upon my heart."

Sir George was less carried away by emotion. "Is this the - the young lady you brought us to see?" he asked Ensleigh, somewhat sternly.

"This is the young lady," said Ensleigh. "I relied upon her to win my cause;" and he confronted the old man with a resolute air.

Sir George hesitated. Ingersoll suddenly caught the patter-patter of a stick tapping on the gravel path as of someone slowly coming towards the schoolroom. "To what is my daughter indebted for the honour of this visit, gentlemen?" asked a somewhat quizzical voice.

Both the old men turned in answer to it. Leaning on her stick, and condescendingly regarding them, stood the Mary Blane of other days. Save for her stick, she showed little signs of advancing years. She had the same imperious air as in her youth, and an expression of inflexible pride lent a hardness to Mistress Blane's face, which was altogether wanting in that of her pretty daughter.

The old lady waited for someone to answer

her. As she stood in the sunlight, the lines round her lips softened. "You were not wont to wait so long ere kissing my hand," she said, graciously extending it in the direction of Ingersoll.

Ensleigh cast an imploring glance at Ingersoll, who stepped gravely forward, executing a bow as he did so which wrung every overstrung muscle in his back. Then he kissed his old love's hand.

"You have not answered my question," said the old lady, the lines of her mouth hardening again.

"Sir George and myself," said Ingersoll, "have ridden forth to wait on you with the view of soliciting the honour of your daughter's hand for our nephew, Mr. Arthur Ensleigh."

"Our family—" began the old lady irresolutely.

Sir George recovered himself. "Mistress Mary Blane—" he said.

"My name is Le Marchand," answered the old lady, with a smile.

"Mistress Le Marchand," said Sir George, with a gravity which showed the training of a lifetime, as he stood before this poor, proud, utterly self-willed old lady, the love of his younger days. "Mistress Le Marchand, many years ago you refused my hand on the plea that my family was not of sufficient greatness to admit of such a *mesalliance* on your part. My nephew, on his mother's side, comes of the best blood of England, and in a year will be master of Ensleigh Hall. Under the circumstances, may I hope that you will do me the honour to listen to our proposal?"

The old lady hesitated, but Ensleigh knelt down before her, still holding her daughter's hand.

"It would pleasure me, Madam," the young fellow said, "if you would give me the advantage of studying the traditions of high breeding by condescending to reside with us at Ensleigh."

The old lady gave him her hand. "I am tired of this rusticity, for one of my birth and breeding. Be it as you will. Sir George, I

vow you must visit us at Ensleigh, when we shall be better prepared to entertain you. Our cottage here is somewhat small."

Sir George bowed, with conflicting emotions, as he led the old lady down the path towards her cottage. He had resolved to confer a favour on his former love by

suffered for the pride of race."

Sir George placed his hand on his heart and bowed anew.

"Madam, you live again in your daughter. Faith, I could cross swords with Ingersoll for the honour of your hand had time but softened your prejudices."



"HE LED THE OLD LADY DOWN THE PATH."

consenting to the marriage, and she had turned the tables on him, and made him a humble suppliant instead. He glanced at the young couple as they exchanged a lingering farewell beneath the chestnut tree.

"Ah," said the old lady, with a faint sigh; "we were like that once, in the days ere I

"Methinks it were needless to give him the opportunity," said the old lady; and Sir George ruffled forward, utterly oblivious of the rheumatic pains which racked his shoulders.

G. B. BURGIN.



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LACE.



BOBBINS AND TALLY.

THE introduction of pillow lace making was in all probability brought into England during the reign of Henry VI., about 1447, when the influx of Flemish from the Netherlands, fleeing from religious persecution, began to assume large proportions. Among

the Refugees were men of rank, and of all sorts and conditions, including lace makers from Antwerp, Bruges and Valenciennes; these then settled in Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, and Cambridgeshire, introducing their lacemaking, which, alas! has recently almost died out in these localities. But at Honiton and other neighbouring places in the West, the manufacture of bone lace is still carried on by the descendants of the original Flemish exiles, who settled there; but it is quite possible that even earlier than this lace making may have been introduced, as the immigration of the Flemish into this country began as early as the fourteenth century, although the trade did not begin to make itself generally known until a much later date. The English word "lace" in the fifteenth century was also used to describe fine cordes and braides. In a Harleian manuscript of the time of Henry VI. and Edward IV. about 1471—directions are given for the making of "Lace Bascon, Lace indented, Lace bordered, Lace covert, Brode Lace, a round Lace, a thynne Lace, an open Lace, Lace for hatts," etc.

Friedrich List writes, "The Immigration into England of Protestant Artificers, who had been driven from Belgium and Holland by Philip II. and Louis XIV, gave to England an incalculable increase of industrial skill and manufacturing capital." Would

that the immigrants who are at present flocking to our shores were more like those of old! Once introduced, and the secrets of lace making having been mastered, the industry quickly spread. It was prophesied that if England would encourage and develop the art, and rely on itself for its completion, the trade of Antwerp would drop, and England become one of the lace centres of Europe (1550). From the 17th century the demand in England for Flemish laces was great, and when those with the netted groundwork became general, the English people were among those who chiefly monopolised the wearing of them. In France the issue of Sumptuary edict was necessary, through the extravagant monopolisation of laces, and in this England followed her example, as in 1662 the English Parliament awakening to the fact of the enormous sums of money spent on foreign lace, and anxious to protect the pillow lace manufacture in our own country, passed an Act forbidding the importation of all foreign laces. The English lace merchants were at a loss how to provide for the great demand required at the Court of Charles II. They then decided to invite more Flemish lace makers to come and settle in England and to still further increase and more firmly establish the manufacture. England, however, was unable to produce the necessary flax, so this plan did not succeed. The merchants then decided on another scheme: being possessed of large means they bought quantities of the choicest Brussels lace, and after smuggling them into England, sold them as "Point D'Angleterre." In 1678 a vessel laden with foreign lace to be smuggled into England, was captured by the Marquis of Nesmond; the cargo was found to consist of no less than 744,953 ells of lace. From about this time "Point D'Angleterre" became the generally known name of Brussels Point, the latter in time utterly disappearing.

Buckinghamshire, and the neighbouring counties on the north and east sides, may be said to have been the lace making district,

producing large quantities until the middle of this century, when its decline became more apparent. In many places it has since quite died out. In days gone by great fortunes are said to have been acquired by the lace factors, and in Lyson's "Magna Brittanica" we find that "Lace making is in no part of the county* so general as at Hanslope, and in its immediate vicinity it prevails for fifteen or twenty miles round in every direction. At Hanslope no fewer than 800 out of a population of 1275 were employed in it, in the year 1801. Children are there put to the lace schools at, or soon after, five years of age; at eleven or twelve years of age they are able to maintain themselves without assistance. Both boys and girls are taught to make it, and some, when they are grown up follow no other employment, others when out of work find it a good resource, and can earn as much as the generality of day labourers. The lace made at Hanslope is from sixpence to two guineas a

yard in value. It is calculated that from £8,000 to £10,000 nett profit is annually brought into this parish by the lace manufacturers." This extract shows that some years ago, not only was the importance of this trade extensive, but that the sale for it was good, and the purchasers were many. In fact, the demand for it was so great that orders had to be received a long time before

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It was also a most remunerative occupation, and even in this age of machinery and mechanism a good lace maker of the real Buckinghamshire patterns cannot work fast enough, as there is always a demand for the genuine article. Only a few days ago I was chatting to an old lady living in Buckingham, aged seventy-four, who has been a hardworking lace maker for sixty-four years.



A LACE MAKER.

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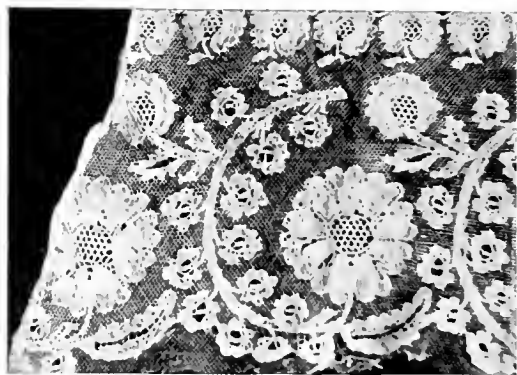


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pattern, it is generally only one of a very narrow width, and to them it does not seem worth while going beyond this. When we find any woman making a really beautiful lace, of a rich and rare pattern, we may safely assume that lace maker to be over 40 years of age. Another noticeable feature that strikes one about the lace maker who has made the art the study and work of her life, is greater refinement of mind, a gentleness, a power of thought, that is wanting in many of our village classes. It seems as if the work had a refining influence, and perhaps the intercourse of speech and mind with mind at the lace schools had a more improving power than the coarser and more manly employments now so much taken up and practised by the young women of our day. Some years ago the Countess of Spencer interested herself much in the lace trade. She was the chief organiser of an exhibition held in Northamptonshire, and many were the competitors and exhibitors who took part in it. The ladies on the committee and those who interested themselves on this subject had great hopes that it would awaken a genuine revival of the trade, by bringing and collecting together a number of designs, and



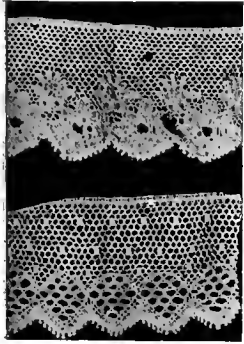
OLD BUCKS' PATTERN—VERY WIDE.

possibly reviving the old ones, and be the means of disposing of them for to many there seems to be no apparent reason why lace-making should not once more become a lucrative home industry. In these hard times

it might still contribute an important addition to the earnings of cottagers throughout the district. Perhaps the time may yet come when the power and the love of the art may return to our villagers, for when the most exquisite lace of antique design can be produced by our own countrymen, why should we not see some of our own English lace in fashionable shops in London as well as those of foreign countries, more especially when so many of ours will compete only too favourably with them?

In the southern part of Buckinghamshire, the hundreds of Burnham and Desborough were especially noted for the art, the workers producing handsome lace of the finest quality, which became very popular with ladies of fashion and fortune. The high prices obtained for the wider and finer sorts were a great help to the families of the labouring classes, who were the principal people employed in producing it. Until only a few years ago there was living at Woburn an old woman who made the lace used for the Princess Charlotte's wedding dress. In later years Buckinghamshire lace has been much superseded by Yak, Maltese, Torchon, and other coarser laces, which are made with less trouble and delicacy of working, fewer bobbins, and less manipulation generally. Among the most beautiful specimens of Buckinghamshire lace made of late years is probably that of the altar linen in Hughenden church; connoisseurs have said that it has scarcely been surpassed by anything of the kind they have seen. At Grandborough, Dorton, Haddenham, Waddesdon, and Oving, both black and white pillow lace of a superior kind was made, showing that it was the chief employment of a large portion of the inhabitants. From the above it will be seen that the industry was generally prevalent throughout this county, except in the South-eastern part; it was much easier to find places where it was being carried on than where it was unknown. It is to be much regretted that the many attempts to revive the art have as yet met with little

success. About the year 1680, lace making was one of the principal employments in High Wycombe, and in the register of that parish frequent mention is made of lace men, lace makers, and lace buyers. In Sheahan's history of Bucks—published in 1862—the following places are mentioned as being engaged in the trade:—"Bierton (black and



BUCKS' PATTERN—
NOW BEING MADE.

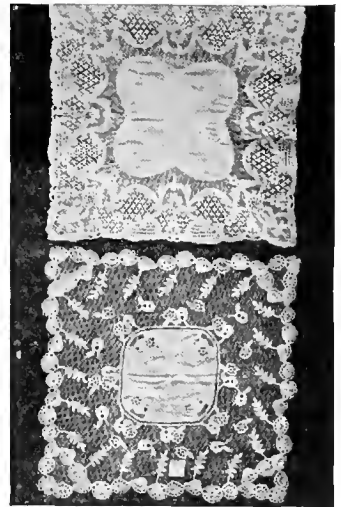
white lace), Cuddington, Haddenham, Great Hampden, Wendover, Gawcott (black), Beachampton, Marsh Gibbon, Preston Bissett, Claydon, Grendon, Dorton, Grandborough, Oving (black and white), Waddesdon, Newport Pagnell, Bletchley, Hopton, Great Horwood, Bow Brickhill, Fenny Stratford, Hanslope (where 500 women and children are employed, about one-third of the population), Lavendon, Great Sandford, Loughton, Milton Keynes, Moulsoe, Newton Blossomville, Olney, Sherrington, and the adjoining villages, Stoke Hammond, Wavendon, Great and Little Kimble, Wooleston, Aston Abbots, Swanbourne, Winslow, Rodnage," etc.

Regarding the men lace makers in days gone by. There were many in each village, they being as skilled as the women; it seems wonderful to us that they were able to keep their hands fit for it, when often during the daytime they were employed in coarser labours. They would then spend the long evenings in working at their lace pillows with their wives or families around them. It was also a great resource when other employment could not be had, as there was always a ready sale for their lace—the buyers visiting each village about once a month, buying up all that they had made since their last round. These men would also supply the threads, etc., that were required. The old parish clerk at Gawcott was a lace maker, when a boy, and

he died only a few years ago; pieces of the narrow lace made by him are still in the possession of some few people in this neighbourhood; also at Bromham, in Bedfordshire, an old man there still makes lace. In Pennant's "Journey from Chester to London" published in 1782, he remarks of Towcester: "This town is supported by the great concourse of passengers, and by a manufacture of lace, and a small one of silk stockings. The first was imported from Flanders, and carried on with much success in this place, and still more in the neighbouring county,"* and at Newport Pagnell, "It flourishes greatly by means of the lace manufacture, which we stole from the Flemings, and introduced with great success into this country. There is scarcely a door to be seen during the summer months, in most of the towns, but that is occupied by some industrious pale-faced lass, their sedentary trade forbidding the rose to bloom in their sickly cheeks." As far as one can notice now-a-days one

might contradict the latter statement, for as a rule one finds the lace maker hale, hearty, and fresh-looking, and living to a good old age, though from what they tell one, it could easily be imagined it would be otherwise, without knowing and seeing them. A lady

living at Paulers Pury, a small village in Northants, has been indefatigable in doing all she can to revive the art, and one may say has re-established the lace school there to a



BUCKS LACE HANDKERCHIEF:
FIRST PRIZE.

*Buckinghamshire.

certain extent, little having been made in the village for forty years' time until the last ten years. Yet years ago it used to be celebrated for the good quality of its lace, every woman and girl making it, and earning good wages. In this village again, we hear of men who not only made the lace, but gave up their agricul-

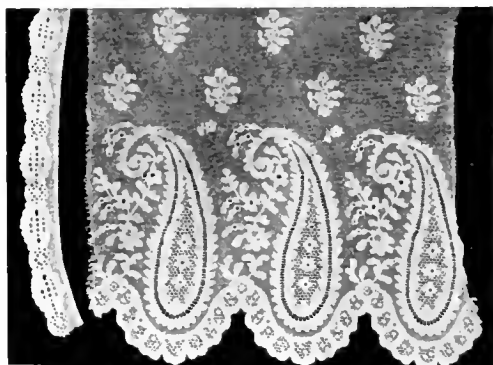


SILVER AND WHITE THREAD LACE.

tural labour, and "sitting at their pillows," earned from thirty shillings to two guineas a week.

Much of the Queen's trousseaux lace was made in Paulers Pury, and at the present time a flounce is now being worked from a parchment used for a shawl border, also part of the Queen's trousseaux. In one cottage an old lady recollects eight or nine workers sitting with their pillows in a circle, all at work on one Royal parasol cover, such being very fashionable in those days. There are now a hundred and forty lace makers in Paulers Pury, these consisting chiefly of very old women, middle-aged married women, invalids and cripples of all ages, down to a child of seven years of age, who walks with crutches. Only a very few of the stronger younger and able-bodied women take a part. This lady also says "it is a sad fact that we have no really skilled workers now under 45 years of age. The younger women, in spite of all efforts to teach them, have neither skill nor patience for the work, which requires concentration and entire attention." No doubt this is owing a great deal to the teaching in our day schools, which in so many

cases gives a smattering of general subjects, without inculcating one useful industry thoroughly. It was to the lace makers at Paulers Pury that the Princess May gave the large order for no less than twelve dozen yards of narrow Buckinghamshire lace, which was afterwards used to trim the small garments made for her little son Prince Edward of York. Last year (1895) the lace makers of Lacy Green were employed in making some gold lace also for the Duchess of York, who is a kind supporter of the art. It was to be the same kind as some that had been used for trimming her bridesmaids' dresses, which she admired. Not many years ago the lace school was an established fact in villages belonging to these districts, where the population was large enough; if not, the pupils attended one in a neighbouring town or the nearest place. A lace mistress and her assistant had generally thirty pupils, girls ranging from ten to twelve years mostly, who were all taught the art thoroughly. The mistress was fully competent to instruct her pupils, but she would not undertake to teach more than this number at a time. The little lace makers were kept very hard at work, their small hands working early and until late in the day. Holidays with them were of rare occurrence, and the amusements of a most simple char-



WIDE LACE NOW MADE AT PAULERS PURY.
PRICE, TWO GUINEAS A YARD.

acter, for in those days, even a few years back, they were more easily satisfied with trifling pleasures, and their tastes were more

simple altogether. Two great festival days with them in the year were Shrove Tuesday, when a half holiday was given, and a whole holiday on St. Andrew's day, corrupted into "Tandering Feast." They will tell you they "reckoned much of St. Andrew's Eve." Or again, another name for it, "wetting the Candle Block." The origin of this latter name was derived from the old custom, in the days when candles were the prevailing means of lighting, and the most had to be made out of the light that they had.

In the schools the girls were not paid weekly, but after the visits of the lace merchants, who came and bought what had been made in a few weeks' time.

"By mercers, lace men, mantua makers pressed,
But most for ready cash, for play distressed."

We still find adjoining some of the old cottages in our villages, small rooms, which were built on to the main room for the lace makers to use as their working place.

A bobbin-maker existed in Buckingham only a few years back; and as late as forty years ago lace bobbins were presented as a love token by a young man to his betrothed. They were made of wood or bone, and on many we find, pricked in colours, the name of the giver or receiver.

The value of the lace was reckoned by the number of the talfies, or little square dots for which an extra bobbin was put on and again removed until the next tally was added. The lace terms are so numerous and unintelligible except to the workers, that it may be as well to append a few of those most generally used here:—"Braids," or as one would imagine, pillow-made tapes, were made for the foundation of fancy laces, a word much in vogue by ladies some thirty or forty years ago. "Foot," the base of the lace. "Footing," or insertion, is a lace without pearl; "Pearl-foot," the pin-hole outer edging, or heading of the lace. "Blades of the wheel," the wooden holders of the thread for winding. "Slides," the parchment strip pinned over the lace while in progress. "Pillow cloth," in which the

pillow was dressed. "Parchment," on which the pattern was pricked. The oldest were pricked on thin strips of horn, then followed those on vellum, and the more modern ones are pricked on card. "Pillow cover," usually of patchwork, to throw over all when in use. "Horse," the wooden stand for the pillow. "A down," the length of lace made without moving the pins. "Talfies," the four bobbins used to make the small square dots, and so called to distinguish them from the heavy gimp bobbin of coarse thread, and having small tin bands twisted round them to distinguish them from the ordinary lace bobbin.



A LACE MAKER'S PILLOW.

"Gimp," the coarse thread running through the lace, and giving strength to the pattern. "Trolly," a name given to a variety of fillings used in some kinds of Buckinghamshire laces. "Jingles," the beads, coins, etc., fastened by wire to the ends of the bobbins, to weight, and keep them down in their right position.

To a lover of lace and its appendages, it is often a trying matter to go to an old cottage where you are told the grandmother has in her day been, perhaps, a renowned lace maker, and after having enquired all about her, and her experience as a lace maker, you are shown her pillow and the bobbins. You then ask to see the celebrated old parchments, and are more often told than not, that they have been burnt, as they could not "abear such (useless now) littering rubbish about," or they have been "aboiled down to make glue" for

the household use. Two beautiful old lace designs pricked on horn parchments, that are still in existence, are the "watch" and the "pansy," both wide faces of extreme fineness and clearness of pattern. In spite of the general destruction of valuable parchments, we are yet grateful for the many rare and valuable pieces of old Buckingham lace that are handed down as heirlooms, and treasured quite as much as many costly jewels, but it is to the industrious and clever Belgian, the real lace maker, that we owe thanks for the present day laces, whose untiring and plodding industry keeps pace with fashion, reproducing both new patterns and those of ancient times. But we will pause—and still say with the feeling of hope expressed by the old Bucks lace maker, "We must rally it up again."

T. E. D. S.

[This article has been written expressly with the purpose of reviving interest in this decaying English industry. Any reader who would like further information may communicate with the Editor.]

JACINTHA'S HEART.

THERE was once a beautiful milkmaid named Jacintha. All the farm-hands told her how beautiful she was, and Jacintha used to answer very politely, "I am very glad to hear it," but when Jocelyn, the plough-boy, told her of her beauty Jacintha answered, "I am very glad you think so."

Now one day Jocelyn went to the fair in the town and he came back bringing two things with him, a piece of news and a fairing for Jacintha.

The piece of news was that the king's son was coming home from the wars, and that now the king's counsellors wished to marry him to the richest princess they could find. But the prince had a will of his own, and besides, he knew what was expected of a prince in a fairy tale, so he was determined

not to marry for money, but to marry the most beautiful woman in the world, whether she were princess or milkmaid.

"Oh!" said Jacintha, when she heard this, "Whether she be princess or milkmaid! That's something like a prince!"

Then Jocelyn brought out his fairing, and spoke, holding it hidden in his hand,

"I've brought you the most beautiful thing in the world."

He held it out. It was a little round looking-glass with a shell frame—such as are sold in country fairs to this day.

"The most beautiful thing in the world?" repeated Jacintha, looking at it but not into it—for she had never seen a mirror. "It is very pretty, but ——"

"Look *in* it," cried Jocelyn, "then you will see yourself—you, who are more beautiful than everything else in the world."

So she looked and looked and could not look away.

"How very beautiful!" she sighed at last. "Oh Jocelyn, how nice for you always to be able to see such a beautiful face as mine!"

"It is nice," he said, looking at her hard—"very nice! But you mustn't grow vain, Jacintha."

"Vain!" she cried, tossing her golden head, "pray what did *you* see when you looked in it?"

"I saw myself, of course."

"And yet you said it was the most beautiful thing in the world? Oh, for shame Jocelyn, you mustn't grow vain!" and she went off laughing, not listening to his explanations.

And now she cared for nothing but looking at her beautiful face in the glass, and she often forgot to milk the cows, and she let the cats get the cream, and the milk went sour because she forgot to scour the milk pans. So then the farmer's wife said,

"This Jacintha has lost her head, I shall send her away before worse comes of it."

And Jacintha had to go.

The night before she left the farm she stole out into the apple orchard to say good-

bye to Jocelyn. He had always been her friend, and, besides, it was he who had given her the looking glass.

The wind shook the white apple blossom down on her hair, and the petals shone like silver in the moonlight.

"How beautiful you are!" said Jocelyn. He was never tired of saying it, for all he had said it so often. "You look like a bride."

"Perhaps I shall be one before long," said Jacintha, stooping to pick up more fallen blossoms, and showering them on her hair as she spoke.

"Whose bride?" he cried eagerly, "mine?"

"Yours?" she laughed. "What nonsense you talk! As if anyone as beautiful as I am could ever marry a plough-boy! You haven't read your fairy tales to much purpose if you don't know better than *that*."

"What do you mean?" asked Jocelyn; but his heart sank within him, for in his heart he knew what she meant.

"Why, of course," she answered, "there's only one person I can possibly marry if my story is to have a happy ending. I must marry the prince, and now I am going to be kitchenmaid at the palace, so that the prince may see me and lose his heart to me."

Jocelyn thought a little, and then he said, "Yes, of course, you're right. The beautiful girl in the stories goes as kitchenmaid to the palace as often as not—but you had better be careful. Suppose you lose your heart to someone else? Everyone is so smart at the palace that you might easily lose your heart to a lord-in-waiting, or even a groom, and not know that it wasn't the prince, until too late."

"That would be a very awkward, certainly," said Jacintha, "because, of course, I could never marry the prince if I had lost my heart to someone else, and then my story would never end happily! What can I do to prevent such a dreadful thing happening?"

"I know what I should do," said Jocelyn, "I should try to be on the safe side. I would never take my heart into such a dangerous place as a palace. Why don't you

leave it here? and then when the prince has lost his heart to you, you can come back and fetch yours and give it to him, and live happy ever after."

"What a good idea," she cried, clapping her hands. "I will leave my heart here in the orchard, and you will take care of it for me till I really want it."

So she took out her heart very carefully, so as not to hurt it. It was a dear little heart, made of living gold. Jocelyn dug a little hole in the ground, and Jacintha wrapped her heart in green leaves. So they buried it, and she plucked a twig from an apple tree and stuck it in the ground to mark the spot. Then she gave Jocelyn three kisses as a reward to him for having found her a way out of her difficulty, and the next morning at cock-crow she started off in the carrier's cart, and went to the king's palace to be the king's kitchenmaid.

As soon as she was gone Jocelyn ran into the orchard. The ground was snow-white with fallen blossom, and over all the dew lay thick. He found the little twig, and he dug with both hands till he came to the little heart of living gold. He held it to his lips, and he could feel the throb of it against them. Then, when he had kissed it many times, he laid it against his own heart, to keep it warm.

"For if I left it in the chill mould," he said, "it might grow cold and never, never be warm again. I had better take care of it for her." So the two hearts lay warm together in Jocelyn's breast.

When three months were over Jocelyn went to the town. He went to the back door of the palace and asked for Jacintha. He looked very smart, for he had on a new smock-frock, and he wore a fresh rose behind his ear, because it was a holiday.

Jacintha came running to meet him, in her blue print gown and coarse white apron.

"I'm kitchenmaid, you see," she said.

"You are ten times more beautiful than ever," he cried.

"Yes," said Jacintha, "so they tell me."

JACINTHA'S HEART.

"Doesn't your looking-glass tell you so?"

"Oh, I have broken that," she said; "I don't need it. I have only to look in people's eyes."

"And have you seen the prince yet?"

"No, not yet; and oh, Jocelyn! that was a good thought of yours about my heart. When I first came I saw the head-cook, and he was so fine I should certainly have lost my heart to him if I had had it about me. But now I know it is all safe, and it will be ready for the prince when he wants it."

"And has the head-cook lost his heart to you?" asked the plough-boy.

"Of course," said Jacintha.

Then Jocelyn went home and worked for three more long months, and he worked so well that his master gave him more wages, and a pretty cottage to live in. Jocelyn planted many flowers in its garden, and sighed, and thought of Jacintha. And all the while her heart and his lay together in his breast, keeping each other warm.

When three more months had gone by Jocelyn asked for another holiday, and again he fared to the town, and went to the back door of the palace and asked for Jacintha.

She came running to meet him, in a pink gown and white muslin apron.

"I'm still-room maid now!" she said.

"You are twenty times more beautiful than ever!" said he.

"So they tell me," answered Jacintha.

"And have you seen the prince?"

"Not yet," she said; "and, oh, Jocelyn! take care of my heart, won't you? I am so glad it is safe with you. I saw the groom of the chambers the other day, and he is so handsome that I wished I had my heart with me, so that I might lose it to him."

"And has the groom of the chambers lost his heart to you?" asked Jocelyn.

"Of course," said Jacintha.

So Jocelyn went home and worked harder than ever, and the flowers he had planted bloomed and faded, and still Jacintha's heart lay against his, keeping it warm.

Then, another three months being gone, he

asked for a holiday, and, as before, he went to the back door of the palace and asked for Jacintha.

"Oh, you must go to the front door for her now," said the scullion, sadly; for he, too, had lost his heart.

So Jocelyn went up the front steps of the palace and Jacintha came running to meet him in a gown of silk trimmed with fur of price, for it was mid-winter. She said,

"I am lady-in-waiting to the queen, now."

"You are a hundred times more beautiful than ever," he said.

"So they tell me," she answered.

"And have you seen the prince yet?"

"No, he has not yet come home from the wars, but to-morrow he comes and I shall see him and then I shall come and fetch my heart. Oh, Jocelyn, it is a good thing you looked after it for me, otherwise the king's brother would certainly have stolen it from me, he is so noble and good."

"And has the king's brother lost his heart to you?" asked Jocelyn.

"Of course," said Jacintha. Then Jocelyn went home sadly to his little house. The snow was over everything, and the garden looked as though Spring and Summer were only a dream, and no flowers could ever grow there again, and in the orchard were no blossoms or fruit, but only snow.

"I will go to the palace no more," he cried. And so sad was he that his heart would have turned to ice but for that other heart that lay against it, keeping it warm.

Then three more months spun the year round to the very place where it had been when Jacintha buried her heart in the apple orchard. And one evening, as the plough-boy was coming from his work, he saw a great gilded carriage drawn by eight white horses, and in it sat Jacintha, and on the seat opposite her were her old clothes in a bundle. And the carriage stopped at his cottage door and down stepped Jacintha all in cloth of gold, with many fine jewels.

"I am the prince's betrothed," she said, "and I have come for my heart."

"You are a thousand times more beautiful than ever," said the plough-boy.

"So they tell me," answered the milkmaid.

"And so you have seen the prince?"

"Yes."

"And has the prince lost his heart to you?"

"Of course," said Jacintha. "Let us go and get my heart from the orchard. I do hope nothing has happened to it. Oh, Jocelyn, suppose the birds have scratched it up and eaten it——"

"Don't be afraid," said Jocelyn with a sigh, "your heart is safe enough."

Then he begged her to send away her fine carriage for awhile, and to meet him in the orchard in two hours' time.

"That will make it just a year since you laid your heart away and became heartless."

She agreed, and directly she had left him he ran to the orchard and made a little hole in the ground and took Jacintha's heart from his breast, and, wrapping it in green leaves he laid it there. And his own heart ached with cold and misery when hers was gone.

Now when the hour was come Jacintha came into the orchard and her gown of cloth of gold swept over the snowy shed petals of the apple trees. She came to Jocelyn.

"Is it here?" she asked.

"It is here," he said, "and see, the little twig you set over it has taken root."

And it was so. The little twig had grown to a little apple tree, and there was one spray of blossom on it. Then Jacintha knelt down and began to dig up the earth.

"The earth is very loose," she said, "Oh! if some wicked thief has stolen my heart!"

But the next minute she stood up, smiling, with her heart in her hand. One white blossom fell on her hair.

"So now she will be the prince's bride," said Jocelyn to himself. "However, it is I that have had her heart for a year."

"Now I will take my heart and give it to the prince," said Jacintha. And to keep it safe she slid it back into her breast.

The moment she felt it beat against her girdle she started back and looked at Jocelyn

as one who awakes out of a sleep.

"What is it? Why am I talking nonsense? Oh, Jocelyn, I don't want to go back to the prince. I want to stay with you. You may have my heart if you want it, dear. But no one else ever shall."

And indeed the little heart of gold had lived so long against Jocelyn's, that it could no longer bear to live long anywhere else, and it beat gladly against his as he held her in his arms.

"Let me go," she whispered, presently.

And he answered, "I will never let you go."

But she said, "You want *me*—not all these gold things. Wait—my heart will bring me back to you."

And she ran to the coach that was waiting outside the orchard. She took the bundle of her old clothes out and she went into the deep of the wood a court lady in gold and jewels with a shabby bundle in her hand. But she came out a simple milk maid, and in her arms were all the gold and the fine clothes of a court lady. She tumbled them into the coach, and with them she threw in all the hearts that had been lost to her when she was at court. And the coach took them back to town, where every man was so glad to get his own again that the beautiful Jacintha was soon forgotten. But she herself crept back, through a hole in the hedge, and ran in her milk-maid's dress to where Jocelyn was still standing.

"Now look in my eyes," said Jocelyn, coming towards her among the falling blossoms, "since you have no other mirror."

And she looked, and when she had looked she hid her face against his, and whispered, "Oh love, am I really as beautiful as that—and as dear?"

And before he could answer she had plucked the blossom from the little tree and set it in her hair. "Am I like a bride?" she said. And Jocelyn answered "Yes."

And all the while their hearts beat hard with gladness to be once more so near. And that is the end of the story of Jacintha's Heart.

E. NESBIT.

MARY SIDNEY, COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE.

ON a kind of terrace which runs in the bosom of a pleasant open valley, with some green woods about it, and fine broad slopes of sward on either hand, Penshurst Place, the home of the Sidneys, displays its mellow bulk of gray walls, quaint gables, towers, turrets, and fantastic high-peaked roofs. Though not one of the great houses of England, it is furnished on a liberal scale, and retains its Tudor characteristics with but little modification. The northern and principal front, looking out upon the old park, has been well restored by the present owner, Lord de L'Isle. The western front is not all in the same style, but its effect is impressive; while the south front is a sufficiently quaint medley of buttresses, gables, turrets, and strange projections. Within the inner court is the old banqueting hall, a stately chamber, with quite a mediæval air about it; so that as the yule-logs blaze on the ample hearth, one finds it easy to recall the scenes of the past, when at its huge oaken table sat young Philip Sidney, with his brother Robert and his sister Mary. We shall find this modest sort of necromancy made still easier when we reach the gallery, for there before us hang the likeness of the two brothers, the chivalrous Sir Philip, and Robert, afterwards Earl of Leicester. They are standing arm-in-arm; Philip, a youth of about sixteen, and Robert, nearly three years younger. Both are dressed alike—in doublet and collar. The collar is just the boy-collar of the present day, except that it is fringed with lace. The doublet is thick-studded with buttons down the front; is fitted exactly to the body, with very close sleeves, and turned up with lace cuffs. The colour of the doublet is French grey. They have trunk-hose, very full indeed, of crimson-figured satin, stockings and garters of the same colour as the doublet, with roses at the knees and on the shoes. Their shoes are of leather with tan-coloured soles, and are cut high in the instep, having

much the look of listing shoes of the present day; their swords complete their costume. Their hair is cut short behind, and turned aside on the forehead.

In Queen Elizabeth's room there is a picture of the sister, Mary Sidney, who bears a strong likeness to her elder brother. Her dress differs very little from that of her mother—the stiff skirt, the close bodice, the high waist, the full sleeves, and the ruff or collar round the girlish throat.

Mary was born at Penshurst Place, and spent her childhood in that fair domain. The early studies were carefully superintended by her parents, whose labours were more than repaid by her eager application and rapidly developed intelligence. The auspicious domestic conditions under which the children of the Sidneys grew up have been recorded by Ben Jonson in his well-known form; he specially refers to the wisdom with which their parents watched and guided their onward progress.

To many brothers their sisters are help-



SIDNEY'S OAK, PENSHURST.

mates scarcely less precious, scarcely less trusted, than many wives are to and by their husbands. They share with that intimateness which comes from community of blood, each other's thoughts, opinions, tastes and senti-



ments; they grow up together in a singularly sweet and pure companionship; and so strong and sacred is the tie that even the marriage of one or the other, or of both, fails to materially weaken it. In so true and tender a relation stood Philip Sidney and his sister to each other; it was a union of heart and brain, intellect and imagination, of sympathies and affections. Each responded to the other, like two perfect musical instruments. For Mary Sidney was no ordinary woman; her natural gifts, as well as her acquired accomplishments, raised her to her brother's standard. Osborn, the historian, says, indeed, that Sir Philip had no advantage over her "other than what he received from the partial benevolence of fortune in making him a man (which yet she did, in some judgments, recompense in beauty)." And Spenser addresses her as:—

"The gentlest shepherdess that lives this day,
And most resembling both in shape and sprite
Her brother dear."

But if the world at any time attempted a comparison between the brother and the sister for the purpose of determining with whom the superiority rested, no such comparison, we may be sure, was ever attempted by themselves, nor, on the part of Mary, would any have been permitted, so deep and unaffected an admiration of her brother mingling with her love that she accepted his supremacy as something beyond all doubt. Nor was Philip on his side less mindful of his sister's rare qualities, nor less willing to do them justice. In dedicating to her his prose-poem of "The Arcadia," he says: It's chief protection [shall be] the bearing the livery of your name, which, if much good-will do not deceive me, is worthy to be a sanctuary for a greater offender. This say I because I know the virtue so, and this say I because it may be ever so, or, to say better, because it will be ever so. Read it thou at your idle times, and the follies your good judgment will find in it blame not, but laugh at; and so you will

continue to love the writer, who doth exceedingly love you, and most, most heartily prays you may long live to be a principal ornament to the family of the Sidneys."

Sidney and his sister delighted in the same studies. To each poetry was an exceeding great good, and they loved to cultivate the muse in their hours of refined leisure. Mary did not possess the creative faculty, but she sang some modest songs with a good deal of sweetness. Happy, no doubt, were the years they spent with intervals of absence at Ludlow and elsewhere in the picturesque old Kentish hall, and we can fancy that with charmed vision the fair and stately girl looked out from its windows upon the sylvan landscape which spread around. Sidney has described its principal features: "There were hills," he says, "which garnished their proud heights with stately trees; arable valleys, whose base estate seemed comforted with the refreshing of silver rivers; meadows enamelled with all sorts of eye-pleasing flowers; thickets which, being lined with most pleasant shade, were witnessed so, too, by the cheerful disposition of many well-tuned birds; each pasture stored with sheep feeding with sober security, while the pretty lambs with bleating outcry craved the dam's comfort; here a shepherd's boy piping as he should never be old, there a young shepherdess knitting, and withal singing, and it seemed that her voice comforted her hands to work, and her hands kept time to her voice music. As for the houses of the country (for many houses came under their eye), they were all scattered, no two being one by the other, and yet not so far off as that it barred mutual succour; a share, as it were, of an accompanionable solitariness of a civil wilderness."

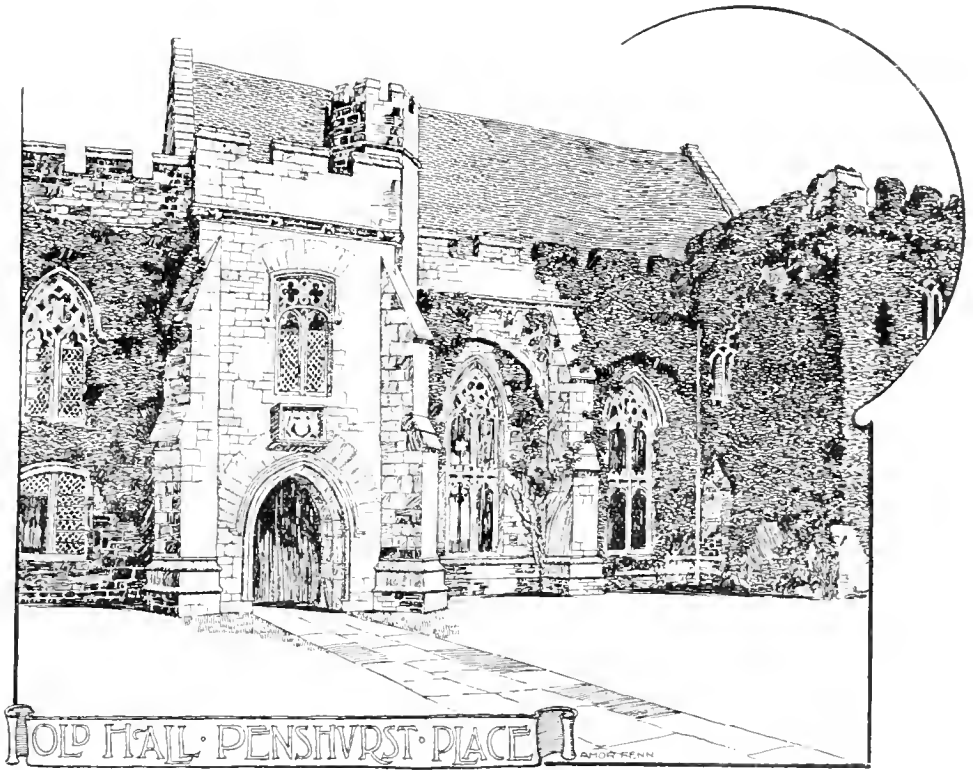
In 1576 Mary Sidney was married to one of the richest and most powerful of English nobles, Henry Herbert, Earl of Pembroke. She was his third wife, and considerably his younger in years, but for the penniless daughter of the Sidneys it was doubtlessly considered a prosperous match, and it seems to have been a happy one. By the Earl she

became the mother of two sons: William, who, in the great civil war, ranged himself under the King's banner, and Philip, who sided with the Parliament.

At Wilton, Lord Pembroke maintained a magnificent hospitality, and his wife drew thither the most distinguished wits and poets of the day: Spenser and young Walter Raleigh, Ben Jonson, and Dr. Donne. She was gifted, I imagine, with that social tact which puts the guest immediately at his ease, and imperceptibly plays upon him until he contributes of his best for the instruction and entertainment of the company. A woman of such versatile acquirements would be able to take an adequate part in the graver conversation as well as in the gayer and lighter talk. I can readily believe that if she acknowledged with a quick, appreciative smile the humour of Ben Jonson, she would respond just as promptly to the sententiousness of Dr. Donne.

Physically speaking, her portrait, at the first glance, gives the impression of a long narrow face, with features inclined to heaviness; but a closer examination shows that the eyebrows are deeply arched, and that the eyes are large, deep, and pensive. The abundant hair is lifted off a low but broad square forehead, and dressed in a cluster of tiny curls. The mouth, of a good shape, indicates much strength of will. I may add that the artist represents her as attired in a most sumptuous but dignified fashion. An enormous ruff of rich lace, scalloped at the edges in a double row, encloses a fair round throat and neck, clasped by two rows of immense pearls. A velvet mantle, bordered with miniver, falls over the long tight sleeves of the close-fitting bodice. Two pear-shaped pearls gleam beneath the hair, and a Psalter is held in the long delicate hands.

This Psalter refers to an admirable paraphrase of the Psalms in verse, which Mary Sidney, assisted by her brother, executed at Wilton, about 1580; a version so sweet, tender, and dignified, as to draw from Hartley Coleridge the remark that "It is a pity it was



not authorised to be sung in churches, for the present versions are a disgrace and a mischief to the Establishment." The contemporary, George Daniel, had already eulogised

"Those hymns which thou didst consecrate to Heaven,
Which Israel's singer to his God did frame : "

hymns which, he adds,

"Unto thy name eternity have given,
And make thee dear to Him from whence they
came."*

The Countess also composed "A Pastoral Dialogue in Praise of Astræa"—or Queen Elizabeth—abounding in ingenious conceits, according to the taste of the time, and marked by a certain fluent grace of versification. A brief specimen will satisfy the reader, who is impatient now-a-days of adroit compliments and tricks of phrase.

* These lines occur in Daniel's dedication to the Countess of his tragedy of "Cleopatra" (1594).

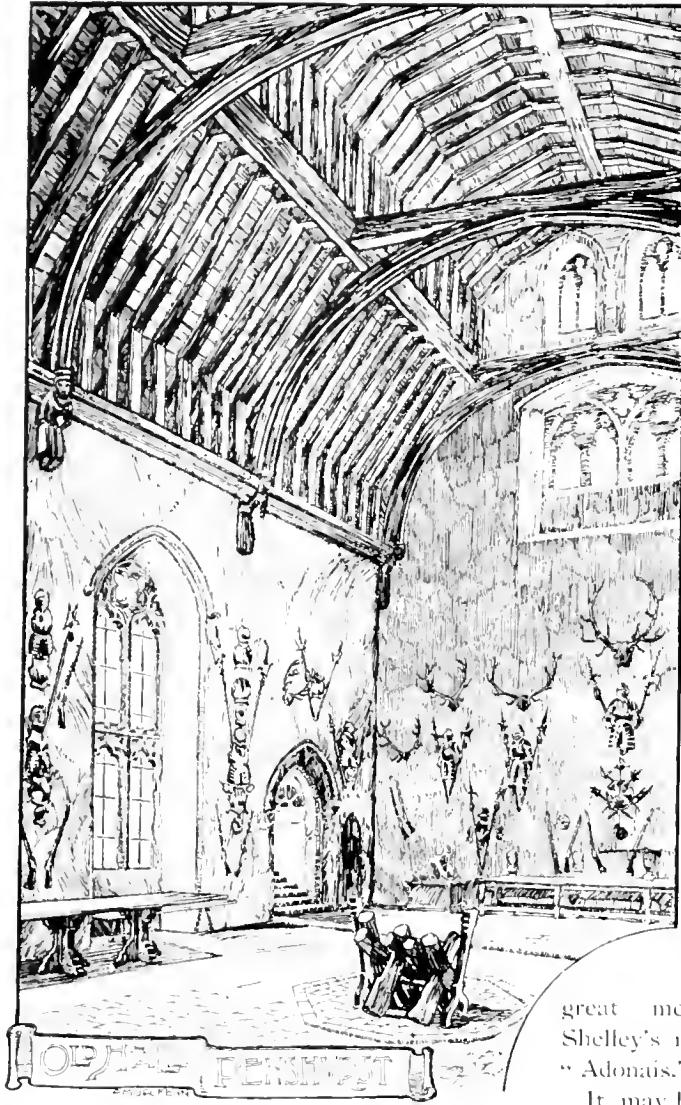
THENOT. Astræa may be justly said,
A field in flowery robe arrayed.
In seasons freshly springing.

PIERS. That Spring endures but shortest time,
This never leaves Astræa's clime ;
Thou list, instead of singing.

THENOT. Then, Piers, of friendship tell me why,
Thy meaning true, my words should tie,
And strive in vain to raise her ?

PIERS. Words from conceit do surely rise,
Above conceit her humour flies,
But silence naught can praise her."

It was while on a visit to his sister at Wilton (in 1580), that she suggested to Sidney the composition of "The Arcadia"—a book which, with all its faults, is one of the landmarks of our literature, and one we could not have spared. Yet it is certain that its author anticipated for it neither an enduring reputation nor a wide public ; that he intended it only for the entertainment of his sister and a limited circle of friends. In his dedicatory epistle he writes :—"There now



have you, most dear, and most worthy to be most dear lady, this idle work of mine; which, I fear, like the spider's web, will be thought fitter to be swept away than worn to any other purpose. For my part, in very truth, as the cruel fathers among the Greeks were wont to do with the babes they would not foster, I could well find it in my heart to cast out in some desert of forgetfulness this child which I am loth to father. But you desired me to do it, and your desire to my heart is an absolute commandment. Now it is done only for

you, only to you. If you keep it to yourself, or to such friends who will weigh error in the balance of good-will, I hope for the father's sake it will be pardoned, perchance made much of, though in itself it have deformities. For, indeed, for our own eyes it is not, being a trifle, and that triflingly handled." When Sidney left Wilton and went up to court, he continued to transmit to his sister the sheets of manuscript, as he found leisure to go on with them; but some of them got mislaid and lost. He never completed the work, and on his death-bed expressed a wish that it might be burnt.

It was a great blow to his sister when the chivalrous Sidney died, on the 17th of October, 1586, of the wound he had received on the field of Zutphen. She endeavoured to divert and express her grief by the composition of an elegy, entitled "The Doleful Lay of Clorinda," the "sweetness of whose verse," was praised by Spenser. It contains some passages of great melody, and evidently was in Shelley's mind when he wrote his immortal "Adonais."

It may be objected that the sorrow for a brother's loss which could find expression in "a copy of verses" could neither be very deep nor very lasting. But, on the other hand, we must remember the character of the times in which Philip Sidney and his sister flourished. A "virgin Queen" was on the throne, and surrounded by an atmosphere of poetry which interpenetrated every social relation. Queen and courtiers, statesmen, seamen, nobles,—all seemed to move like figures in a gorgeous masque,—to live as if England were the Arcady of the old world

fables, and the Golden Age had come back again—so that though passion might be real, and emotion and feeling genuine enough, and we know they were, they assumed an external artificiality because clothed in the ancient forms. The English youth wooed the English maiden under the fanciful disguise of Strephon and Chloe, and when Strephon and Chloe were married, the poets made haste to chant a bridal hymn, or an Epithalamium. And so, too, when they passed away, flowers were cast upon their graves—monodies, elegies, doleful lays, and other memorial verses—which were the utterances of a true grief, though now they seem to some of us mere mechanical exercises.

Therefore, I would not have the reader doubt for one moment the sincerity of Lady Pembroke's sorrow for her chivalrous and accomplished brother. It was a memorial wreath deposited on her brother's grave; just as Milton laid his "Lycidas" on the grave of his friend, King, and Tennyson his "In Memoriam" on that of his friend, Hallam.

Another tribute of affection which the Countess paid to the memory of her brother was the publication, about five years after his death, of "The Arcadia." "The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia, written by Sir Philip Sidney, Knt." Such was the title she affectionately gave to it. The hiatuses in it were supplied for this purpose by Sir William Alexander, and others; and some additions were made to the second book by the Countess herself.

The Countess was left a widow in 1582, and survived her husband about twenty years. She died in 1602, at her town mansion in Aldersgate Street, then a sufficiently picturesque locality,—happy in her death as she had been in her life,—"happy," says Hartley Coleridge, "as the praise of grateful poets' could make her; happy in her fine reputation, and it is to be hoped, in the dutious attendance of her elder son, and happy in dying too soon to see her younger offspring—

"Hold a wing

Quite from the flight of all his ancestors."

She was interred in the vault of the Pembroke family in the chancel of Salisbury Cathedral; but without any monument. In addition to the literary composition already named she published "A Discourse of Life and Death, written in French by Philip Mornay, done into English by the Countess of Pembroke, 1590. Likewise, the Tragedie of Antoine. Done into English by the Countess of Pembroke, 1595."

[THE LATE] W. H. DAVENPORT ADAMS.

SESTINA OF SLEEP.

I saw the waterlily's petals close:
The dragonfly, joy sated, fold his wings:
The water-boatmen hurry to the shore:
The cold toad crawl beneath the willow tree:
Perched on one leg, the robin, feigning sleep:
And a bat flutter quickly o'er the stream.

I watched the patient ripple of the stream,
So slow, it seemed to shun the sea, its close.
And, like the lily, longed to court sweet Sleep.
I softly prayed that Guardian Angels' wings
Might shade my soul. Whispered the willow tree:
"Breathe gently, Breeze, that bloweth from the shore."

I, lowly longing, scanned the further shore.
Right in my path still rolled the singing stream
Hurrying past the weeping willow tree
To whose sweet sorrow never cometh close,
Never, an end. But she had spread her wings,
And unavailing were my prayers for Sleep.

Yes, rudely spurning me, once gentle Sleep
From my embraces to the other shore
Fled, calling dreams to open wayward wings
And follow her, their Queen, across the stream:
Or, if they yearned to stay, their books to close,
Written on dead leaves, plucked from Wisdom's tree.

Softly upon me from the willow tree
Dropped rustling leaves. I did solicit Sleep
Kindly to come, ere Night's dark reign should close.

She, taunting, whispered from the glimmering shore:

"Come thou across this weary rippling stream;
"Forsake thy resting place. Hast thou no wings?"

I whispered wearily: "I have no wings!"
Murmured consolingly the willow tree.

Casting her dead leaves to the sleepy stream:
"Patiently wait: oft have I known coy Sleep,
"Back-glancing from that far-off further shore,
"Reluctantly return before Night's close."

Before night's close, spreading her dusky wings,
She left the shore, and past the willow tree
Calmly came Sleep across the rippling stream.

A. RUTH YOUNG.

Prince's Mother of Denmark
 Prince's Mother of Schleswig-Holstein
 Prince's Mother of Denmark
 Prince's Mother of Schleswig-Holstein
 Prince's Mother of Denmark
 Prince's Mother of Schleswig-Holstein
 Prince's Mother of Denmark
 Prince's Mother of Schleswig-Holstein



Lady Alexandra Duff
 Princess Alice of Albany
 Princess Patricia of Connaught

SOME UNMARRIED PRINCESSES OF EUROPE.

Princesses, whether in fairy tales or in real life, are always objects of great interest to the rest of the world, and to young people in particular, and we all like to read of them, and to know everything about their home life. At the present time there are in Europe numbers of very charming and very beautiful Royal girls who are not yet married, and the readers of *ATALANTA* will doubtless be glad to make their acquaintance here.

Naturally, the chief interest centres in those who live in our midst, and we turn first to the portrait of Princess Victoria of Wales, who is now the only unmarried daughter of the Prince and Princess of Wales. The three sisters are devoted to each other, so it is small wonder if the Princess Victoria misses her two companions greatly. She is her mother's right hand, both in social and domestic duties, and it will be a sad day for the Princess, when this remaining daughter leaves her. She is very domesticated, and a capital dressmaker. In the days when they were all girls at home, they used to cut out, fit, and make their own simple gowns, Princess Victoria working the sewing machine and doing much of the cutting out. The young Princesses are not able to attend classes when in town, but their mother is so desirous of their learning every new branch of artistic work, that she sends one of the governesses to take lessons in each fresh accomplishment and then they impart the knowledge to their Royal pupils. In this way they have become proficient in glass painting, poker work, and spinning. Princess Victoria is very fond of this latter industry, and last year she had some of the hair clipped from her poodle spun, and exhibited in neat hanks at the Royal Albert Hall. She is very clever with her needle in making dainty little gifts, many of which are destined for the cottagers round about Sandringham. The Princesses are all most popular with those who know them,

and many kindly little acts are traceable to Princess Victoria. She is a thoroughly good all-round sportswoman, going in for skating, fishing, and bicycling. She is fond of horses and dogs, and has a great many pets in the pretty Norfolk home they are all so fond of. The Princesses, especially Princess Victoria, are all devotees of the art of photography, and many a good snap shot is the result of their proficiency. She is also a clever amateur actress, and often takes part in the theatricals got up by her aunt, the Princess Beatrice. This second daughter of the Prince of Wales is such an authority on all matters of etiquette that even Her Majesty the Queen refers knotty points to her for solution. The only remaining daughter of the Princess Christian, Princess Victoria Louise of Schleswig Holstein, is one of the sweetest and best beloved of the younger members of the Royal family. To watch her out at any entertainment is to quickly learn how much she is liked by all her cousins. She is so gentle, so unassuming, so courteous to the many and candid to the few, that it is small wonder she is such a favourite. Her mother, always energetic in doing good, finds in her a most willing helper, and during the temporary blindness from which the Princess suffered a while ago, her daughter was the greatest comfort to her, for she not only undertook many of her social and charitable duties, but she attended to her mother with the utmost care. Her two brothers are very fond of her, and during the recent Ashanti campaign, when Prince Christian was in that ill-fated country, his sister suffered great anxiety on his account. Her pet name is "Doria," and at Cumberland Lodge she has her own dainty sitting-room and her own black cobs to drive and ride. "Jubilee" and "Unionist," are the two cobs, and they are much attached to their young mistress. Princess Christian is not by any means allowed to enjoy a monopoly of her daughter's society, for the invitations to Windsor and to Germany are frequent, to say nothing of those to Sandringham, to Scotland, and to many other localities.



THE PRINCESS VICTORIA OF WALES AND PRINCESS CHARLES OF DENMARK.

Princess Victoria is often to be found with the Queen at Osborne, and her arrival there is ever hailed with much delight by the little members of the Battenberg family. The Queen is always glad to have her with her, and her own daughters are most anxious for her presence whenever their mother is in any trouble. This sympathetic princess deserves the best of fates, and we all wish her a truly good husband when she does leave her girlhood's home.

The two little daughters of the Duke and

Duchess of Connaught are very highly educated and interesting girls; both are tall and dignified, and have charming manners. The sisters are neither of them very strong, and their extreme pallor often makes them appear to be more frail than they really are. By nature they are particularly unselfish and very good tempered. They are not often seen in London, but very frequently round about their country home—Bagshot Park. Their father has himself taught them riding, and they enjoy many a good gallop along the

Surrey lanes. These young princesses have had some experience of travelling, for they were in India for some time with the Duke and Duchess of Connaught. On one occasion, when they were living at Poona, a teak tree had to be cut down to be made into a prayer-desk. Prince Arthur and his older sister contented themselves with giving seven strokes each on the tree, but little Princess Victoria Patricia, who goes by the name of "Pat," went on striking with the greatest determination till her arms ached. Part of the time which their father and mother spent in India, the children lived with their grandmother, and the Queen used to delight in having them with her, entering into all their studies and their amusements.

Princess Beatrice of Saxe Coburg-Gotha, whose pet name is "Princess Baby," is a merry warm-hearted little maiden, with a great love of animals. Like her sister the Grand Duchess of Hesse-Darmstadt, she has the true Russian type of features. Her mother is most particular about her education and bringing up; and little Princess Baby is most courteous to everyone, and consequently a great favourite. She is very quick at learning, and a good musician. Princess Alice of Albany is another little Royal lady who has greatly endeared herself to the nation. She is thirteen years old, and becoming daily more of a companion to her widowed mother. She is very like her cousin, the Queen of Holland, both in features, in figure, and in her way of carrying herself. When the cousins are together they have very jolly times, for both are full of fun, and as many comical things happen to the little Dutch sovereign, she keeps the remembrance of them all in her mind, so that she may tell her cousin Alice all about them when they meet. The Duchess of Albany has very strict notions about education, and likes both her children to pay every attention

to their lessons. The little Duke inherits his father's—the late Prince Leopold's—wonderful memory. Having a good ear for music, and a love for drawing, Princess Alice comes up to South Kensington from Claremont once or twice a week to have lessons in a small private school there, and she studies art in Mr. Ward's studio. At home she has a very pretty room of her own in white and blue, and here she keeps her favourite books, and all her other treasures. In the school-room there is a neat desk and stool, all in one, which the Duchess of Albany patented herself. A white pony, called "Prince," is Princess Alice's own property, and she enjoys many a good



PRINCESS ALICE OF ALBANY.



PRINCESS VICTORIA (EVA) OF BATTENBERG.

ride on him, or sometimes on "Bosco," the little Duke's donkey.

"The pet of the Court." Such is the description given of little Princess Victoria Eugenie Julia Eva of Battenberg. Her Majesty simply adores her; her three brothers think there is no sister in the world like theirs; her mother, Princess Beatrice, is very proud of her only daughter, and finds in her the best of comforts in the great grief she has lately passed through; while the late Prince Henry was devoted to the little Princess, and spent much of his time playing with her. She is a most amusing companion, for nothing escapes her attention. She is very quick at noticing

things and she makes such droll remarks that the Queen and Princess Beatrice often have a hearty laugh over them. Her favourite amusement is riding, and, unfortunately, this led to her having a bad fall from her pony, when at Windsor some few years ago. The Empress Eugenie is Godmother to this pretty Princess, and she is quite as much wrapped up in her as those who are constantly with her, many beautiful presents finding their way into her own dainty rooms.

The three unmarried daughters of the Crown Prince and Crown Princess of Denmark have been with us so recently that some few notes on their private life may be interesting to readers. Princess Ingeborg who is eighteen, will now take her eldest sister's place, and probably she will be much thrown into the society of her new sister-in-law, Princess Carl of Denmark. In appearance she is like her mother, the Crown Princess, having strongly marked features; Princess Thyra, who is more delicate, is sixteen, and little Princess Dagmar is ten. They live very simply, these young Danish royalties. During the winter, which they spend in Copenhagen, they sleigh and skate a great deal, and in the summer, at Fredensborg, their grandfather, the King of Denmark's castle, they enjoy some very happy weeks with their English cousins, and those from Greece and Russia. They have tennis and boating parties, bicycling on the lawns of the Schloss, picnics in the lovely woods, and fishing on the Esrom Lake. Their brothers are very fond of them, and they teach them all kinds of outdoor sports. Like all Danish ladies, these young Princesses excel in house work. They are capital dairy-maids, good cooks, and in fact they can, to use a homely phrase, turn their hands to anything.

One of the most interesting of these European Princesses is Her Royal Highness Feodora of Saxe Meiningen, the only child of the hereditary Prince of Saxe Meiningen, and the eldest of Queen Victoria's great grandchildren, as her mother was the eldest daughter of the Empress Frederick of

Germany. Princess Feodora is just seventeen, and as she is one of the wealthiest princesses of the day, there are always rumours about her engagement to some more or less influential personage. She is very pretty, and so bright that she is most popular with all the Court circles, including the Empress Frederick. She is very musical, and does the greatest credit to her instructress, Fraulein Marie Wurm. The Princess also has considerable talent for painting. She is very carefully brought up, and most simple in her tastes. The girl-Queen of Holland is one of her greatest friends. She is very fond of her cousins, the Emperor's little sons, and she frequently spends the day with them and their sweet little sister, Princess Victoria Louise, who may also claim a place amongst the unmarried Princesses of Europe.

Princess Clementine of Belgium, the youngest daughter of the Royal House, is twenty-four. She is an exceptionally lovely girl, with very dark hair and eyes, and fine chiselled features. She carries herself admirably. People think she is cold and reserved because of her dignified bearing, but she is really one of the most sympathetic and warm-hearted of girls. She was brought up, like her sisters, in easy, simple fashion, going about amongst the people with her father, or with her uncle and aunt, the Comte and Comtesse de Flanders. Her education was a very thorough one, many of the professors from the Conservatoire in Brussels attending at the Palace in that city, or at the Chateau de Laeken, where the Royal Family spend many months of the year. Princess Clementine has very literary tastes, reading omnivorously and contributing to *La Jeune Fille*, a monthly magazine which her mother started in 1889. She is also a great rider, and may often be seen on horse-back in the Bois de la Cambre, or driving with the king along the boulevards. She has several dogs, and two or three always follow her when out. Dancing is another accomplishment of these Belgian

princesses, both Princess Clementine and the Archduchess Stephanie being acknowledged experts in the ball-room. Several painful tragedies have occurred in the life of the former: first the terrible death of her sister Stephanie's husband; then her governess, to whom she was greatly attached, was burnt to death in front of her at Laeken; and a year after her cousin and *fiancé*, Prince Baldwin of Flanders, died after a very short illness. The princess is an exemplary daughter, and it is said she has refused several offers of marriage because she is loth to leave her father and mother.*

Princess Clementine's niece, the Archduchess Elizabeth of Austria, is thirteen, and a clever bonny princess, the object of much affection, for her mother, the widowed Archduchess Stephanie, is wrapped up in her, and her grandfather, the Emperor of Austria, is devoted to her. She has been most thoroughly educated, and she is so naturally clever that she learns everything very easily. Her mother likes to take long walks in the mountainous districts of Austria, and she goes with her; often they sit down to rest under a tree, and the Archduchess Elizabeth reads aloud to pass away the time. She is a good rider, and like her father, the late Prince Rudolph, she is fond of horses and dogs. About three years ago the Queen Regent of Spain sent her a team of lovely cream-coloured mules from Andalusia, a present which greatly charmed her. It would be quite impossible in the space at command to mention all the Austrian Princesses who are unmarried at the present time. There is the pretty little four-year-old daughter of the Archduchess Valerie, Princess Franziska Josephine Elizabeth Valerie, the Archduchess Mariska, who is to about to marry the Duc d'Orleans, and her two sisters, Elizabeth and Clothilde, the Princess Sophie of Bavaria, whose father is known as the Royal Oculist, and who is one of the most charming and original of princesses, helping her father with his patients, and otherwise leading the quiet, uneventful life

SOME UNMARRIED PRINCESSES.

of an Austrian country lady, with many others.

A very prominent princess is the Duchess of Albany's sister, Princess Elizabeth Louise Hermine Erica Pauline of Waldeck Pyrmont, who is so often with her sister in London. She lives with her stepmother and often stays with the Queen Regent of Holland and the Duchess of Albany. At home the Princess Elizabeth is much liked. She is the favourite companion of her baby step-brother, and all the young ladies in the town of Waldeck claim her as a friend, for they spend an afternoon once a week at the Castle sewing for the poor, the Princess herself being the most industrious of them all. Like the Duchess of Albany, she has great strength of character, and has a most sweet disposition.

In Spain there are two princesses, the Infanta Mercedes, and the Infanta Maria Teresa. The former is sixteen, and very

dignified and reserved. The little king's favourite is his second sister, but he tyrannises over them both, and tells them they must obey him as he is the king. They have an English governess, and they speak English very nicely. Their life is a very quiet one, whether they are at Madrid or at San Sebastian. In Russia there is the Czar's sister, the Grand Duchess Olga, who is fourteen. She is a splendid musician and very fond of all artistic pursuits, for her father, the late Emperor of Russia, had them taught everything of the kind. She leads a quiet life, sometimes at Gatchina, sometimes in a pretty little villa at Imatra, on the coast of Finland. Another Russian princess who bids fair to be a great beauty is the lovely little Grand Duchess Olga, the present Czar's daughter. The Princesses of Montenegro are very much talked of just now; they are beautiful girls, half Oriental, half Grecian in style. Montenegro is a very war-



PRINCESS BEATRICE OF SAXE-COBURG AND PRINCESS FEODORA OF SAXE-MEININGEN.

like little country, and the princesses go out accompanied by soldiers, rather than by ladies in waiting. Both Princess Anna and Princess Olga are considered great beauties. The Princess Marie of Greece is a most charming and accomplished young lady, she speaks several languages and is an excellent musician, and takes the greatest possible interest in the philanthropical institutions at Athens. Like her elder sister, the late Crown Princess of Greece, Princess Marie is to marry a Russian Grand Duke, so that she will not long remain amongst the Unmarried Princesses. Naturally, there are many other Royal girls in Europe who should come under the heading of unmarried princesses, but it is impossible to mention them. We must reserve the notes on them for some future time.

LAURA ALEX. SMITH.

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S VERSES,
WHILE PRISONER AT WOODSTOCK.

Writ with Charcoal on a Shutter.

Oh, fortune! how thy restlesse wavering state
Hath fraught with cares my troubled witt!
Witnes this present prisonn, whither fate
Could beare me, and the joys I quit.
Thou causedest the guiltie to be losed
From bandes, wherein are innocents inclosed:
Causing the guiltles to be strait reserved,
And freeing those that death hath well
deserved.
But by her envie can be nothing wroughte,
So God send to my foes all they have thoughte.

A.D. MDLV. ELIZABETHE, PRISONNER.

LETTERS TO A DEBUTANTE BY
A WOMAN OF THE WORLD.

II.—ON THE MANAGEMENT OF A DRESS
ALLOWANCE.

THE *debutante* having been successfully launched in Society by her presentation at Court, begins her season's toils and triumphs. Not the least among the toils is the need for constant supervision of her wardrobe, since no young lady who respects herself would wish to appear in crushed draperies, tumbled silk, torn frills, or dirty gloves. The necessity for re-furbishing tulle ball-gowns renders them both expensive and troublesome, yet nothing is prettier for the very young. The days when girls wore starched white muslins buttoned up the back, and tied with innocent blue ribbons has long gone by, and tulle and chiffon have elbowed them out of favour.—Dress is undoubtedly more expensive than it was in the early Victorian era, when the wardrobe of a *debutante* seems to have been of the simplest description. It is to be hoped that she sometimes wore more substantial foot-gear than sandals, and in wintry weather abjured white muslin. We know that when the cold came she wrapped herself in a pelisse made of cloth and fur, and donned a poke bonnet and muff of gigantic proportions. I have my suspicions as to the white muslin lying concealed under the folds of the pelisse, but of this fact we have no historic evidence. What would Elizabeth Bennet or Anne Elliot have said to the wardrobe of a modern young lady? Can we picture to ourselves Catherine Morland in a "tailor-built" costume? Yet, the latter is a necessity which the exigencies of modern life has made. Moreover, the tailor-made dress must be well cut, and hence it is advisable to employ a good, and (as a matter of logical sequence) an expensive tailor. Then, what with cycling gowns, serge yachting dresses, tweed costumes for the moors, ball frocks, smart afternoon dresses suitable for

receptions and garden parties, tea gowns, *matinées*, woollen wraps, jackets and mantles, the poor girl of the day has more to do with her money than the maiden of fifty or sixty years ago. Life is more complex than it was. Everyone is more or less in Society now-a-days. People who used to be ranked as middle-class, and who considered themselves as such, and contentedly accepted their position, now elbow Dukes and Duchesses during the London Season, and besiege the Master of the Buckhounds for tickets to the Royal Enclosure at Ascot. Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Jones appear in tiaras as fine as any Countess's, and at the present day in England, dress is no distinction of class, high or low. Does not every 'Arriet imitate her mistress's bonnet or hat, be she a Clapham slavey or a Belgravian upper servant? Patrician and plebeian buy the same materials, and wear pretty much the same clothes, and as fashion at the end of the century demands a greater variety than it did in the beginning, I for one, conclude that the task of dressing on fifty pounds or sixty pounds a year is more difficult now than when the century was young.

In most households daughters on entering Society are given allowances which they are expected to manage discreetly. Where the stipend is small, the task of making both ends meet, and yet appearing well and suitably clothed, is a puzzle. There is but one way to avoid debt, and that is by paying ready money for everything you get. It is as well also to divide your allowance into portions, allotting first of all a proper sum for *necessities*, and lastly, spending what remains on superfluities or luxuries. Take warning by the melancholy example of the girl who squandered all her substance in dresses and hats, and found herself with stockings in holes, worn and even ragged underlinen, shabby gloves, and boots and shoes whose palmy days were past. The first desideratum for every lady is fine neat underlinen. This need not be lavishly or expensively trimmed, but it *ought* to be of the finest material, and

neatly sewn by hand. Her stockings should be good, and as far as the allowance goes they may be pretty. Silk clocks or embroidery are a great improvement to stockings. Handkerchiefs should be fine and dainty. Gloves and boots of the best and neatest description are indispensable to every well-dressed woman; and cheap gloves and boots are false economy. Having therefore set aside reasonable sums for linen, boots, gloves, stockings, and handkerchiefs, our *debutante* should next consider her tailor-made gowns. A well-cut coat and skirt is an easy acquisition now-a-days, and one of blue serge is useful alike for yachting, for travelling and for ordinary country wear. Next comes a cycling dress, and a best cloth gown as well as a rough tweed for Scotland. Skirts and blouses must not be forgotten, and silk blouses made at home are a great saving, since one can buy good silk for very little, and a maid ought to be able to make them quite as well as a shop. Evening dresses come under the heading of "necessities," and should therefore be provided for before smart garden party or afternoon reception gowns. A girl can always wear a neat tailor-made skirt with pretty silk blouse, and look well dressed, whereas she cannot appear in Society at night without a *decolleté* gown. If the allowance be limited, I should advise her to choose white and black. A white silk trimmed simply with white tulle or chiffon, and a black canvas or grenadine made up over silk, and relieved by different coloured flowers and ribbons, always look well. Of course the evening gowns may be multiplied *ad infinitum*, but I am advising the girl of ordinary or limited means, and not the millionaire. The question of cloaks and wraps next demands attention. One good mackintosh, and opera or evening cloak, a well-cut cloth jacket, and a tweed Inverness cape are necessary, and may, indeed, be considered indispensable. As for the smart velvet and silk or lace and jet capes so much favoured by young girls in London, they may be reckoned! superfluities, and classified

accordingly. Hats come next in the list of necessities, and every well dressed woman should see that they are always fresh and trim. A battered tawdry hat is a sure sign that its wearer has lost her self-respect, and the spice of coquetry without which no woman can be charming. A sailor hat is almost as accommodating a bit of wearing apparel as an *en tout cas* umbrella. Trimmed with a plain ribbon, it is a serviceable comfortable hat for country, sea-side, cycling, golfing, yachting, and what-not wear. Glorified by the addition of quills, or wings, or rosettes, the evolutions of the ordinary sailor hat into the garden-party hat gear is complete. No more adorable finish to a maiden's toilette could be conceived; and ostrich plumes and flower-decked picture-hats are not to be compared to the dainty femininity of the prettily trimmed "sailor" as it perches on a lovely head. For winter, of course, felt and velvet hats are preferable, and then comes the chance for plumes and birds of paradise, and less airy fairy-like millinery. Where the *debutante* has clever fingers and good taste, she can effect an enormous saving by trimming her own hats and bonnets. The materials of which head-gear are composed cost little, and one pays generally for the rent of Regent Street or Bond Street shops, and for the display of patronising young ladies who walk about them.

Lastly, come the luxuries; and first and foremost is a riding habit, which circumstance may combine to render an absolute necessity. As for veils, lace, ties, parasols, fans, ribbons, fichus: do they not all play their part in the drama of a woman's life, and even so far back as Ovid's time, did not "ladies come to see, and to be seen."



THE RING OF KNOWLEDGE.

"DEAR Mr. Vere,—We much regret to learn that you have not succeeded in finding Madame Augarde: but it is, of course, some satisfaction to know that you are certain she is no longer in Paris: and if you are correct in your inference that she has taken refuge in Berlin, we are sure to be able to find her shortly, thanks to the admirable police arrangements of that city. We shall be glad for you to remain some time longer in France, as we shall require your ability in unravelling a case placed in our hands. You probably know the particulars of 'L'affaire Viroflay' as well as we do. The widow of the deceased Count is looked upon with suspicion by his relatives as having had some connection with his death: and now her brother-in-law (who is an Englishman) has placed the matter unreservedly with us. We hope, with your help, to clear away the mystery that now surrounds the Count's demise." So ran the letter from my chief. I had read this letter and the papers accompanying it through and through again. I had been to the chateau where the accident, crime, or tragedy—whichever it was—occurred, had questioned the servants, and prosecuted enquiries in every conceivable direction without the slightest result: and L'affaire Viroflay seemed in a fair way to remain as much a mystery to me as it had already proved to the French police.

I was again in Paris, in my old rooms in the Place St. Antoine-des-Cochons—two rooms and an ante-room, on the fifth, it's true, but which had the advantage of opening on a wide balcony which gave me a view, not only of the Place below, with its beds of brilliant flowers and falling spray of the fountain, but also of the ceaseless ebb and flow of life, the bustle and noise in the Boulevard St. Michel—the dear old Boule Miche of one's student days—how long ago they seemed, those salad days, and so far away

were scattered those I used to know, that they might have been a handful of leaves in the wind that is called time, and I a ghost, come back to haunt my old habitat in the Quartier Latin.

I had finished my *déjeuner*, sent in from a neighbouring restaurant, seasoning my meal with some such melancholy thoughts as these: and while lingering over my coffee and cognac I took out my instructions and read them over for the hundredth time. What was the use of it, come to a deadlock as I was? I thrust them impatiently into my pocket-book, and made up my mind to sit *chéz moi* no longer, debating uselessly: I would go out and see if there were any letters awaiting me at the post office, and chance should arrange the rest of the day for me: perhaps I would dine on the other side of the river: perhaps I would go as far as the Bois—*cela dépend!*

I descended the Boulevard and walked along the Quai Voltaire, spending some pleasant minutes at the secondhand book-stalls which line the river parapet, turning over the books and quaint prints displayed, and looking into all the curio shops I passed, as was my wont.

One window displayed a show of battered brooches, rings, and a hundred small and doubtful objects of "bigotry and virtue." There was only one thing worth looking at twice in the whole window, and at first I passed it over: my second glance, however, showed me a very uncommon ring.

It was undoubtedly a genuine antique: a large cameo cut in sard and curiously set in thick, dark gold: the cameo itself—a head, full face—delicately cut, and the setting uncommon. I could see that some characters were cut in the gold on the inner side, characters such as are written on the Incantation Bowls in the Louvre, that were dug up by M. Botta from the stone-heaps marking the site of long-forgotten Chaldean cities, cities of the Sun and Moon and the Fish. I was so impressed with the look of the ring that I entered the shop to

enquire its price. A frowsy little old woman, wrapped apparently in a bedgown of some dark printed stuff, with a red and yellow handkerchief worn turban-wise on her head, shuffled forward, and, peering up at me through her spectacles, demanded, in no civil manner, what I wanted. "How much do you ask for that ring? The third in that tray." "Ring?" helping herself copiously to snuff. "All in that tray 65 francs 50, except the turquoise, that's 80; and the pearl ring in the next tray is 100, and worth 125." "This one is 65.50, then?" I said, taking up the one I coveted and slipping it on my finger.

"Yes; but the pearl one is the best: worth 125;" more graciously, "Monsieur should have it for 100, for 95 even," snuffing vigorously the while. "Yes, no doubt the pearl ring is *bon marché*; but this one takes my fancy, so I will have it." "*Eh bien, chacun à son goût: mais Monsieur se trompe—merci!*" sweeping up the 65.50, with a hand that, with the help of age, dirt and snuff, resembled more the claw of some bird of prey than the hand of a human being.

I went on my way rejoicing, crossed the Pont des Tuilleries, strolled through the Gardens, out by the Golden Gates, into the Place de la Concorde and up the Rue Royale, determining as I went that I would dine at Duval's, opposite the Madeleine.

Being early, I hoped to get a table by the window, at the corner of the boulevard, but I found the best place occupied. Still, there was room for two, and the second seat was not to be scorned: and before I had taken two more steps I knew that fortune was friends with me still, for the other diner was my old comrade, Adolphe. The recognition and the pleasure of it were mutual, and in another second Adolphe was on his feet, shaking both my hands in the hearty British fashion I had taught him years ago. We wondered at the happy chance that had re-united us, and congratulated ourselves upon it, and then fell to dis-

cussing our *dîner* together, what time we talked of old days in the Quartier. "How long have you been in Paris? Where are you living? What are you doing? How has fate used you?" from Adolphe, as he ate.

"In the old Hotel; in the Place St. Antoine des Cochons."

"No? But how droll!"

"And you, Adolphe?"

"Oh, I am at Barbizon. You remember Emile: he and I and Pierre—you do not know him—rent a cottage there. Pierre is Pierre Esme Vouard, the poet, thou knowest," tutoying me in the old fashion. "And you remember Mère Charcot?"

"I should think so."

"Aie! the life we led her. Well, she keeps house and looks after us, and we get on famously—but famously! And Emile has a picture in the salon, a fine thing—*Le Philosophe et le Cupidon*; and I," with a shrug, "Oh, I do well. I have sold several sketches to Maupas—he is an old thief, *bien entendu*, but what would you? He has sent me a rich American, who has commissioned a large landscape. It is as broad as it is long: that was one of your sayings."

"And Marie?"

"Is married, pretty as ever, and keeps a restaurant out by the Porte Maillot," Adolphe said, succinctly.

"And Jules has gone to Rome," I said, passing him my cigarette-case.

"Poor Jules! I was sorry to hear that he had thrown up painting and gone in for being *dérot*. Were not you, Adolphe? He was good company, Jules, in the old times."

"*Mais oui*," Adolphe said, vaguely, with his eyes on my ring. He had always been a dabbler in all sorts of out-of-the-way lore and antiquities, I remembered, and, seeing that my new acquisition had attracted his interest, it struck me that he might be able to decipher the letters engraved on the gold.

"Oh, Adolphe"! I said; "can you tell me the meaning of this—," trying to take the ring off my finger, but to my great surprise

I was unable to remove it, although it slipped on with the greatest ease. "I can't get it off!" I continued, holding out my hand. "I suppose my finger must have swollen, the result of our good dinner," laughingly. "But it is a quaint old ring, is it not?"

"Yes, very old," Adolphe said, with emphasis. "I suppose you know the sort of superstition attached to that ring?"

"Indeed I don't. What is it?"

"No! Is it possible that you don't know the history of your find? I believe there never existed but seven of them, and of these all but three were supposed to have been destroyed. They were called the Thirsty Rings."

"What an extraordinary name!"

"The Thirsty Rings, or the Rings of Knowledge, which you will, had extraordinary histories," Adolphe said, drily. "Whoever owned one had only to let his blood drop on



A GENUINE ANTIQUE.

it and in some unexplained way it would tell him whatever of the past or future he desired to know."

"Extraordinary!" I said again, looking at my ring with double interest and excitement. "Go on."

"Catherine de Medicis had one, and it

foretold to her the death of all her sons and the accession of Henri Quatre, and in her rage at the unwelcome prophecy she threw it into the fire. To come to our own time, Josephine had one, and it showed her her divorce and Napoleon's downfall. Old Pio Nono had another, taken from the sarcophagus of Augustus, *on dit*, and it foretold him the loss of the Temporal Power. The third ring is in the Sultan's treasury."

"Then this must be Josephine's, for I picked it up to-day at a curio-shop in the Quai Voltaire," I said, as we called for our account and settled it. "I got it for a song, too."

"Ah! it is better to be born lucky than rich. Take good care of that ring: the Thirsty Rings are famous for unaccountable disappearances," Adolphe said, as we went down into the Place de la Madeleine, and arranging a day whereon to meet at Barbizon, we parted, Adolphe going towards the Gare St. Lazare, and I turning down the Rue Royale, on my way homewards.

I don't know what I had done to tire me, but, soon after I reached my rooms I fell into a sound sleep, and never woke until some time past sunset. The room was already full of shadows, though there was a little afterglow in the sky, and I lighted my lamp and closed the windows, and settled myself at my desk, grudgingly enough, for I hated to report another failure to the chief. It had to be done, however, so I did it: and then I threw my pen down, and gave myself up to discontented thought. I fell to idly turning the ring round and round on my finger. It slipped off quite easily now, to my surprise, for I remembered that I had tried in vain to remove it from my finger at the restaurant; and in spite of myself, I began to recall the story Adolphe had told me, and I examined the ring more minutely, turning it this way and that, and finally holding it up to the lamp. The cameo was a very large one, Seven-eighths of an inch long, at least, by five-eighths, and the carving of the head

was masterly. The face was that of a youth, in the first flush of manhood, the lips parted, and the head set in a kind of cloud. "Why should I not work the charm: at least, I could try, and if it failed—. It would fail, of course: it could do nothing but fail. It was all ridiculous rubbish, and the day had gone by for such superstitious notions. Still—" I took up the ring again, looked at the parted lips, and made up my mind to try. I opened my penknife and pricked my wrist, letting the drops of crimson blood fall exactly on the open mouth. "One, two, three! No change. Of course, what else did I expect? Four, five, six. Merciful Heavens! were the old tales true, after all?" I threw the ring on the table as if it had burnt me, and stared at it aghast. The face was growing, growing, and the cloud which framed it was moving—swirling and circling slowly like the vapour in a retort, changing its colour like an opal: now white, now blue, now faintly rosy, while points of brilliant light seemed constantly to thread their way through the vapour.

The face was now a human face, and it seemed to grow no more. It was still pallid, the face of one dead, slowly life seemed to pass into it. Colour came into the cheeks, and presently the closed eyelids opened to show eyes almost insupportably bright, and the full red lips were parted in a smile.

For some minutes I sat stupefied, nervously grasping the carved arms of my chair; then I took my courage in both hands and spoke, but my voice sounded low and far away, and utterly unfamiliar in my own ears.

"Who are you? What are you?"

"I am the shadow of the shade of That which men call knowledge, and gods another name—that for which men venture all; and which gained is bitterness of spirit and vexation of heart." I cannot say I heard, I rather seemed to understand than absolutely hear.

"You speak my language well," I said, more taken aback than ever.

"All tongues are but fragments of that

great speech which all once knew in that which men call the past, and which all must speak again in that which mortals call eternity. But why have you enquired of me, oh child of the later time?

"Ask, and I must answer thee. For now I am of thee, and thou of me, for evil or for good, blood of thy blood, and life of thy life."

"Well," I said, gathering courage, "I am in a difficulty, my reputation is at stake, and perhaps my future career. I have come to Paris to trace out a mysterious crime, and I am further from the light than ever. The Comte de Viroflay perished from poison, and I must find by whom it was administered. Can you tell me? If so, name your price?" I added, rather bitterly, "for I suppose knowledge is not given for nothing?"

"I ask no price," It said. "Said I not that, for a little season, thou art of me and I of thee? Blood of thy blood, and life of thy life? I can tell thee, or, better, show thee, all. Say, wilt thou see?"

"Yes; I will see," I replied.

Slowly the face—I saw the ring no longer—raised itself till it was beside my face, and ever the opal-coloured cloud whirled and swirled and circled around it: and the ineffable sweetness of the immortal eyes looked into mine, but the smile that curved the full red lips was edged with bitter contempt. "Look," It said, and as It spoke a light mist gathered at the end of the room, towards which we were looking, It and I. As I looked the mist drew slowly right and left like parted curtains, and I saw a familiar scene. It was the garden of the Chateau de Viroflay. I knew it again in a moment: and where I sat motionless in my chair I saw the roses on the terrace nodding gently in the evening wind, and saw the green reaches of the garden sloping softly down to the lake below. Down the curving pathway a man and woman were walking. I had seen their painted presentments, and I knew them at once for the dead Comte and Madame la Comtesse. I rose from my chair to see them better, almost wondering that they did not see me:

and still they came close and closer yet, until I could see the adoration in the Comte's dark eyes, and the bored expression of Madame's charming face. They turned when they were almost beside me, went slowly up the steps to the terrace, and so disappeared through an open window into the chateau. The mist dropped swiftly upon the garden, blotting out its light and colour, then rolled up again like a shrivelling leaf. "Look again," said the voice by my side. It was night this time, and though I could not see the moon there was a broad stream of light on the lake, darkened every now and again, I suppose, by a cloud passing over the moon. The window that was open on the terrace before was open still, and from its shadow a cloaked figure steals forth. The Comtesse!



"IT IS NOT LOVE."

She descends the steps leading from the terrace to the garden. She seems to have some steady purpose in her mind, for she looks neither to right nor left of her as she goes. Had she done so she must have seen the figure that followed in her footsteps: closely and noiselessly as her shadow. I could not see the face, but the

build and height helped me at once to guess that Madame's shadow was no other than her husband. She went swiftly along the path between the Diane and Minerve fountains, and in a second she stood on the bank of the lake, watching watching for some one. Ah! she has not long to wait, for almost immediately a boat came out of the shadow of the balustrade and pulled up close under Madame's feet. I can see the rower; it is Madame's cousin, le Capitaine de Vionville. He was standing on the bank beside Madame, when I looked again, and the boat was abandoned to her own devices, while he stood, talking eagerly, with Madame's eyes fixed on his face.

"It is not love," whispers the Thing beside me, in answer to my unspoken thoughts. "It has been love, and might be love again, if she were free. This meeting is not of her seeking, and she would but say farewell. The man who has her hand, has her truth, too." M. le Comte was too far away to hear what Madame said, or to see the unmistakable air of repulse with which she at last turned away from her cousin. "Had he done so he would live now, but this was not to be." Slowly the Comtesse turned and moved away, and softly her shadow followed her again: softly, too, the mist fell, blotting it all out. When it again clears it is a white and dusty road winding along between tall poplars which I see. There is a small town in the distance, and the gleam of water between the poplar trees, and along the dusty road some figures walking briskly, all dyed in the mellow light of sunset. The pictures passed before me like a panorama: the white and dusty road, the passing peasants, and presently, walking amid them, a spare and upright figure—the Comte again. Then the town: its narrow streets and little lighted shops: through the open doors sudden glimpses of crowded *cabarets*, or quiet rooms where white-capped women prepare the evening meal. We follow a narrow winding street: Rue St. Louis le Grand, I notice it is named. Here there

were many little shops of indifferent prosperity, among them a dingy-looking pharmacien's opposite a fountain. The door was closed, and remained inhospitably shut heedless of the Comte's summons; but he knocked again, this time with so peremptory a hand that the door opened grudgingly, and the shrivelled head of a little old man peeped out. Seeing M. le Comte, he opens wider the door and bids him enter, and we follow. I see the shop itself, with its outer door jealously barred and bolted, its dusty ill-furnished shelves and bottles, the old pharmacien standing behind the counter, and M. le Comte, pale and stern, whispering something, with his mouth on a level with the old man's ear.

The pharmacien grinned, rather than smiled, drew back, and shook his head, gesticulating vigorously the while. Again the Comte whispered, and perhaps this time it was rather a threat than a request, for the pharmacien trembles violently. He seems to attempt to expostulate, but M. le Comte, with a vehement gesture, turns towards the door, and, afraid, perhaps, that the *seigneur* was really going to carry out his whispered threat, the little old man threw up his hands and, reluctantly shuffling away, proceeded to search for something among the bottles in a cupboard at the back of the shop. After much fumbling in its dark recesses he returns with a tiny phial in his hand, which he gave to Monsieur de Viroflay, with a sinister smile. "'Tis not wide, nor deep, but 'twill serve," and M. le Comte seemed contented enough with his purchase as he put Louis after Louis into the pharmacien's shaking hand. "I should know that sinister old face again anywhere, if only by a villainous-looking scar which runs right across his brow, from temple to eye." Then the mist engulfed all, the Comte, the evil-looking pharmacien, and the little dimly-lighted shop. When it again cleared, it was the ball-room at the chateau which I saw, brilliantly illuminated from end to end, its walls banked with flowers of the rarest kinds, its floor

covered with guests dancing to the music of a band, stationed in the musicians' gallery, at the far end. Madame la Comtesse I could easily distinguish, radiant with health and beauty, waltzing with her cousin de Vionville, a gallant figure in his gay uniform, and M. le Comte, dark and sad, dancing with *his* cousin, Madame des Greux. I could not tell if she complained of fatigue, or faintness, but I saw the Comte lead her to a seat in one of the window-recesses, and there leave her, after bowing with the courtliness for which all the de Viroflays had been distinguished. The scene shifted now to the supper-room, where every detail was perfect and everything ready, but for the moment it was empty. There were three supper-tables, exquisitely arranged with damask roses and stephanotis—Madame's favourite flowers—the stephanotis massed in low glass troughs, the roses in tall silver vases, and trails of roses covering the delicate damask. The tables followed three sides of the room, the fourth end being the great folding-doors leading to the ball-room. Through these, as I looked, the Comte comes stealthily into the empty supper-room; and for a little while he stands still at the head of the first table, looking at the flowers with dreamy eyes. Here they were in even greater profusion: roses heaped up recklessly round the tall vases, and not an inch of cloth to be seen for the stephanotis showered upon it.

"Stephanotis—and Stephanie is Madame's name," I said to myself. "It is the anniversary of her wedding, I know, but is it anything else?"

"It is her fete-day," it said in my ear. "Have you forgotten? The Comte will call upon his guests to pledge his wife, and then——." My eyes went from the Comte's gloomy face to the four places at the head of the first table, where, among the other glasses, stood four magnificent Venetian goblets, two trumpet-shaped and two globular.

"Those four places are for madame and

her husband, and the two cousins, I suppose," I said, my eyes straying back to the Comte, who was stooping over the table now, with one hand in his waistcoat pocket and one busy with a tall Venetian glass. There was the chink of glass against glass, the falling of two or three drops from a little vial into the tall goblet, and then the Comte turned quickly away, and left the room.

Turned quickly away—and in turning disarranged the trail of crimson roses which sur-

rounded his glasses: a small thing to do, but it cost him his life—on such trifling causes do great events hinge.

Scarcely had he left the room when a grey-headed butler came quickly in, followed by a young footman. His accustomed eye saw that the flowers had been disarranged at once, and he began to replace them, grumbling the while. In so doing his hand caught M. le Comte's Venetian goblet and overturned it; hastily calling the footman Ambroise to remove the broken glass, he moved the next tall goblet—that intended for the Capitaine with which the Comte had been meddling—into the place of the broken one, the footman bringing a tall goblet for M. le Capitaine from the last place at the table.

Hardly had the change been effected when the double doors opened wide, and M. le Comte and Madame entered, followed by the guests. They were soon seated, and the supper begins. By-and-by the Comte rises, and turning slightly towards Madame,



A CHINK OF GLASS.

made (I suppose) some pretty speech, while the servants were busy filling the guests' goblets. The Comte's speech soon ended, and as he lifted his glass, his guests arose to their feet, following suit and turning their smiling faces towards Madame. The Comte gave the toast, turned to his wife with a bow, and drank off the contents of his glass. The next minute an extraordinary spasm passed over his face, and for a second he stood fighting for breath, his eyes fixed on his wife's horror-struck face. The guests are too startled and terrified to more than gaze in horror. Madame has sprung to her feet. With a cry of "You - you" (the first sound I had heard since the drama had re-enacted itself before me) he fell heavily across the table and lay there face downwards, crushing the roses to pieces. The cloud gathered quickly this time, and hid everything. I passed my hand across my face, and when I looked again the mist had vanished, the Face too; the ring lay, a harmless-looking thing, on the table in front of me. Surely I had been dreaming? But no; there was blood still on the ring, on the table, on the arm of the chair, where, no doubt, it had trickled from my wounded wrist.

I stepped out on the balcony. The moon had already risen, and the cool night air soon enabled me to re-gather my scattered senses. I had the end of the clue in my hands now, and the sooner I cleared up the whole mystery the better; I should recognise the street, the pharmacien, and his shop again directly. I would start at once for Pesonsac, and by travelling all night I might reach the chateau to-morrow. I went back into my room, took some papers and loose money from my desk, and telling the concierge I might be away some days I hailed a passing fiacre and drove to the Gare d'Orleans.

I just managed to catch the train, and tired out by the strain of my weird experience I slept soundly till we arrived at Pesonsac.

I could see the white towers of the chateau through the woods, and, yes!

surely this was the road I had seen — at any rate I would try it; so I bargained for the solitary conveyance that I found at the station. "Where to, Monsieur?" "Ah! straight on. I will tell you when to turn." We had been driving for nearly two hours along a straight road and I was beginning to doubt, when quite suddenly a bend in the highway brought town walls and a gate into view. "Through the gate," I called cheerily to the *cocher* "up the Rue St.-Louis-le-Grand and to the Bureau de Police." It was no mere vision then, no phantasy of an overwrought imagination! Here was the dark mediæval gateway with its obliterated shields, here the twisting streets I had seen, the fountain with its battered saint; here, the ill-paved street of Louis-le-Grand and the pharmacien's shop — and the very man himself peering from the open door. I sat well back in the carriage, and a few minutes more brought me to the Bureau de Police, with the familiar tricolour flapping lazily in the morning wind over the *porte-cochère*. "You may remain; I may want you for some time." "*Bien*, Monsieur." I was soon closeted with the Chief of Police, and explained my errand as briefly as possible.

"But yes! he knew the man well; he was of doubtful reputation. If monsieur's information was correct it would clear up the mystery, and, yes! lift an undeserved stigma from a noble lady. How had monsieur acquired his knowledge? It was wonderful! *Tiens*, he would go with me himself, if I would permit." It was the very thing I wanted, so I "permitted" it cheerfully. Confronted with the agent of the law the pharmacien confessed that, under a threat to reveal some discreditable secret of his past, the Comte had forced him to part with a certain minute portion of a deadly Eastern drug. This drug dissolved in a certain medium would immediately evaporate, leaving the poison invisibly attached to the vessel into which it had been poured, to be re-dissolved by any liquid poured into this same vessel. Supplied with this important link in our chain we

drove thence to the chateau de Viroflay, and sought the last link—the old butler, Josef.

“Did he remember the night of his late master’s death? Everything that occurred?”

“But yes, perfectly.”

“The incident of the broken and replaced glass, for instance?”

“Ah, yes! but how does monsieur know that?”

“Monsieur had extraneous information. Well?”

“M. le Comte told me to use the Venetian service of glass—it was presented to one of his ancestors by the King—or something—of Venice, at whose court he had been the ambassador of Le Grand Monarque.”

“Presented by one of the Doges. Yes! Well?”

“M. le Comte gave me instructions that these Venice glasses were not to be filled till he rose to propose Madame’s health; and I obeyed his orders, of course. I thought it very strange, but Monsieur le Comte would brook no questions. Yes, I had a misfortune, and broke the glass laid for the Comte himself, the flowers had become disarranged——”

“*Bon jour, mon ami*, that is all we want of you.” And as we went out the chief turned to me with a look of relief, “Your information was correct in every detail, and I felicitate monsieur on solving a riddle that baffled us. So the Comte fell a victim to his own villainy? but, *Mon Dieu!* what a narrow escape for *le pauvre Capitaine*—what a narrow escape! Will monsieur honour me by taking *déjeuner* with me?”

“A thousand thanks and a thousand apologies, but, no; I must return at once to Paris. Business calls me.”

It was not until I was once more in the

train that I noticed the ring was not on my finger—nor could I remember having noticed it on my hand since I left Paris. In my haste I must have left it on the table in my rooms; but I had locked the door on leaving, so, of course, it would be safe enough. It was night when I got back to Paris, and after a hasty inquiry “Any letters—any visitors,” answered in the negative by the sleepy concierge, I took my key and hurried upstairs, taking the steps two at a time in my haste.



HE FELL HEAVILY.

I unlocked the door, lighted my lamp, and gave a hurried glance round my room. All was just as I had left it, even my desk, which I had omitted to lock in my haste; the spots of blood still on table cloth and chair, but look as I might, search as I would, the Ring of Knowledge was nowhere to be found.

WILLIAM BEER.



PRACTICAL SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM.

LAST month I undertook to say a word or two on book reviewing, as the most eagerly sought for of all journalistic work. In giving advice to beginners and I cannot make it too plain that this column is addressed entirely to beginners, and by no means to anyone who knows more than the writer in giving advice to beginners it is almost impossible to avoid platitudes; everything that is true has been said so many times, that if one only knew when and where, and could remember chapters and verses at the right moment, a list of well-chosen references would be more useful than many magazine articles. But in default of such a list I will start boldly with a platitude. The first duty of a reviewer is to be a good reviewer, interesting in himself irrespective of the merits or demerits of his subject. After this comes consideration of the author, the public, and the editor.

The editor as a rule knows exactly what he wants, and can take care of himself, so we may leave him out of the question, except to remind the would-be writer that there are a good many of him, and that he varies. One will refuse work for the very qualities which would induce another to accept it, and *vice versa*.

The public, perhaps, varies less than the editor. The public wants always first of all to be interested. There is great diversity of opinion as to whether reviews really sell a book or prevent its sale, but one is at any rate safe in assuming that a few people at least read them in order to see if a book is worth reading or not. They do not want to know the plot of a book, nor "how it ends," they want to know if they will find pleasure in reading it, and they will know this less by the exactness of your enthusiasm than by the extent of your enthusiasm—that is to say, by noting whether it has pleased *you* or not. Do not be too much flattered, this by

no means implies a blind following of your advice, but simply that those people having learnt your taste can compare it with their own, and know instantly if a book which has pleased you is likely to give them pleasure or the reverse. It is quite possible that though they may like your article, they may find their tastes so opposite to yours that they will avoid all the books you praise, and buy those you condemn. But this need not concern you in the least, you do your duty by them simply by making your impression clear to them. If you are writing for readers of this class read your book through at a sitting if possible, and write while your impressions are red hot. Correct your style next morning if you will, but not your opinions, that is to say—modify anything, but change nothing, unless your hurry has driven you into errors of fact.

But the greater number of readers of reviews read them just because they are not likely to read the books themselves, and wish to know the whole story. These people naturally want to know all about a book; they want the plot and the climax, and many extracts. If you are writing for readers of this class you have only two points to study

brevity and clearness in your synopsis of the plot, and skill in selection of such extracts as will best convey the character of the work you are describing.

Authors, naturally, do not care for notices of this sort. One would hardly like to venture on an opinion as to what sort of a review an author wants, but one thing he has a right to expect, and that is, that in criticising his book you shall criticise it as it is—his own meaning and intentions—and not run away in pursuit of your own theories. An example will best show what I mean. The work in question was a play—not a book—and the criticism was spoken, not written, but it will serve none the less in illustration. The play was one of character rather than incident. The author was showing how one of his characters—an intriguing and cold-hearted woman—turned a trivial incident which had

occurred to her own advantage by taking it in an entirely different spirit, in discussing it with four different characters. The critic in question missed the author's point in defending a theory. "We were told the same thing three times in one act," he said, resentfully. And he was ready to condemn the play on that account. Now, the rule that an author should not tell us the same thing twice over, either in a play or book, is a good enough rule, but the author had not broken it. He was not concerned to tell us a trifling incident which we had seen take place; his concern was to show us the skill with which his heroine arranged her point of view to suit her audience. The author had just cause of complaint against the critic; he had not been fairly criticised, because his intention had been entirely missed.

Of course, when an author fails to make his meaning clear it is his own fault if he is misunderstood; but while it ought to be clear to the average comprehension, he has a right to expect his critic to be a little quicker of understanding than the average, if only by result of long practise in novel reading. It is often a great help in arriving at an author's intention to read his chapter headings, and take his own word as to what he is trying to do, and then find out for yourself if he has done it well or not.

Anyone who is so fortunate as to secure regular reviewing will learn from the Editor how he wishes the work done. Anyone about

to make a first attempt should read carefully all the reviews in the paper to which she desires to contribute, and note if they are of—one might call—the impressionist order, written apparently with a view of influencing probable buyers of the book; or if they are more of the synopsis-extract-synopsis sort; or if they are conscientiously analytical; then write her own review in her own individual style, but of the class the paper affects, and send in the MS., not, of course, in any hope of having a first or second, or even a tenth or eleventh, attempt published, but as a sign that you can supply work of that sort, and are willing to do so should any stress of business cause the Editor to require outside help.

Of course if any writer finds one style of reviewing easier to her than another, she has only to reverse the rule, write her article as she thinks best, and send it to the periodical which seems to her to show most preference for the kind of work she has produced.

For our next month's exercise students may send in a synopsis, with quotations, of "Westward Ho!" The prize will be given to the paper which gives the fullest account of the book in the fewest number of words, and with the shortest and best-chosen quotations. No paper should contain, with the quotations, more than two thousand words.

This Competition will be closed on November 25th.



THE BERRY ART SCHOOLS.

In Fellows Road, Swiss Cottage, stands a house that looks, but for the large brass plate upon the gate-post, much like its neighbours. And yet how different when once within its portals; for Art is the supreme goddess there, with Mr. Berry for her high priest and his students her devoted acolytes. As becomes acolytes, they are most of them young, though there is no restriction of age, either way. But to be serious upon a serious subject. There are two studios, and both overlook a large garden, which is often in requisition for landscape and background studies; and proves very useful, as landscape is one of the features of the school. All through May, June, and July, there are sketching classes under Mr. Berry's direct supervision; nor have they far to go to find good subject among that pretty and accessible county north of London. This summer, now faded and gone, a dream to be remembered—nothing more, was devoted to Pinner and its immediate neighbourhood. But though flowers, still-life and landscape have their share in the school work, it is drawing from the life which is the principal and main point; and as soon as ever the student can draw from solid objects (never from the flat, that, happily, is not allowed in any shape) she is put to work from the head, hands, etc., and after that from the entire figure, the "altogether," as Trilby called it; and undoubtedly that is the only way to gain correct knowledge of how to make your figure-pictures look real, and as though there was a living, breathing, form under the drapery, no matter whether it be in classic painting or a fashion plate. The day I saw the schools, the model was a little boy in a charming pose, holding an antique water-pot. Speaking of antique, Mr. Berry fully encourages a complete study of the ancient masters, but *after* the student has worked long enough from the living model to be able to appreciate

all the beauties of marble or cast, and not as some schools do, to start the beginner with it, till because of their unpractised eye, they grow heartily tired of the cold inanimate form. Here they have no chance of doing that, as the model only sits for a limited time, so they must work steadily and rapidly to obtain a faithful impression of what they see. Mr. Berry's method is only to draw the masses of light and shade, and out of these grow the



HEAD FROM LIFE, BY MISS M. KROHN.

figure, landscape, flower-group, whatever the student is doing, thus giving a solid appearance without any hard outline; and as he is all the time working with his students there is small chance of their falling into that bad habit; also he is able far more easily to discover the talents or weaknesses of each individual student than in schools where the master only comes at stated times and gets through as quickly as he can. Mr. Arthur Hacker, A.R.A., has given much assistance in the school, which he frequently visits, and also in judging and awarding the prizes of the

composition sketches, which form a very important feature of the student's training. Every month these composition sketch competitions are held, both for figure subjects and landscape, when the sketches are publicly criticised. The illustrations give a fair idea of the quality of the work produced.

Another branch is miniature painting, and one student, Miss Reeves, has made great success in it, and she has been fortunate in getting her work exhibited at the Royal Academy and Liverpool Corporation, also in obtaining several commissions. The miniatures reproduced with this article are from her work. I cannot leave the school work without mentioning the delightful afternoon teas for afternoon workers. It is quite a little picnic, and as it is made in another room, a charming bright little room, it is very good for the students as it takes them right away from their work, more so that when they return their eyes are refreshed and can readily judge what their work is like, and also having had a chatter-mug they are not depressed by the silence of the studio; this room also serves as a luncheon room for those who do not go home to lunch; which reminds me that I have not mentioned that Mr. Berry always has a list of pleasant and reliable apartments close to the schools for students living in the country; so readers of *ATALANTA* who are trying for the splendid scholarship he is offering to the Members of the Sketching Club, the thought that you live in the country need not stop you if you mean seriously to go in for Art. Remember, she is an exigent mistress, and demands all your attention and most of your love.

But Mr. Berry's influence does not stop inside the schools, he, too, has a Sketching Club for giving instruction by correspondence, and I should strongly advise the country members to join it as well as the A. S. C., for it is only two guineas for twelve months, and

for that you may send ten packets each containing four drawings and these will be returned accompanied by written criticisms. One of the great advantages of the arrangement is that the drawings may be further developed or fresh ones done on the same subject and then sent up again; thus the student obtains a series of written critical



A FESTIVAL, BY MISS M. SLADE.

lessons. The subjects are entirely optional; and at certain hours students living in London may by appointment have their work criticised verbally.

I should also mention that black and white for illustration receives good attention, and that the composition class is splendid practice for it.

MAUD J. VYSE.



O N THINGS IN GENERAL.

"How delicious it is to be back in London," said everyone, as the little coterie met in the chaperon's cosy room. "How delicious to be back in London."

"I love every stone of it," said the chaperon. "Every time I go abroad and see other cities I come home more in love with it. It is only when one has seen every other city in Europe that one really learns how delightful London is, how well-managed and well-behaved. I used to see faults in London when I knew less of other capitals, now I believe it is the best mannered and kindest-hearted city in the whole world. But if I once get fairly started on the praise of London I shall talk all the afternoon. You had better interrupt me, girls. May, you have been the farthest, what sort of a holiday have you had, and what are your impressions of America?"

"America is a great deal too big to leave an impression on such a little personality as me," said Cousin May, doubtfully, "but I have had a lovely holiday. I like America better for my visit. Americans in London don't do themselves justice. They talk about their towns and their parties, and such things as that—things we can do better than they, but I have been in a country almost as beautiful as the Thames and the Cumberland Lakes made into one, where the girls go about in serge skirts and print shirts, swim in the lake before breakfast, and ride and shoot, and row in regattas, just as we do in the country at home."

"Do Americans go on telling you how much better America is than London when you are over there," asked the bride.

"I have not heard one word of what is vulgarly called 'American bounce' during my whole stay," said Cousin May. "On the contrary, everyone whose opinion is likely to matter seems to love and admire England. I have been meeting a great many old soldiers, real Colonels and Generals, you know. Not the Artemus Ward and Mark Twain 'General,' who is only a General because he keeps a general store, or has three stacks of chimneys to his house, but what they call 'Loyal Legion Men'—that is men who really fought with distinction in the Civil War and were decorated for distinguished service. All of these men speak with admiration and real honest liking of England and the English Army."

"Then I shall know what to say when next I hear an American boasting that if there was a war they would beat us in three weeks," said the debutante. "I'll say, no you couldn't, for the men who can really fight would be on our side."

"Well, you wouldn't be far wrong," said Cousin May, "for one of the things that struck me most was how clearly the better class of Americans see the drawbacks of their own country, and how much they regret them. I don't mean that they don't love their country, but they love it with their eyes open; but I am getting too serious. I'll only say one thing more, don't ever let an American sneer at our climate again."

"They say we have not a climate at all, we have only samples, don't they?" said the engaged girl.

"Yes, but I can testify that I have seen as many kinds of weather in a week at Lake George in New York State as the whole of England could produce in the time. Now let some one else give their experiences. Has Lily been reading Lever, as she was advised?"

"Yes," said the debutante. "Lord Kilgobbin' and lots of other books. They haven't made me witty yet, but they have helped me to see the point of what other people were saying, and that is something, isn't it."

"Have you suffered much going down to dinner with strangers?" asked the chaperon.

"No," said the debutante. "You see I was staying at the same country house, and we rode, or drove, or walked so much that at dinner-time I was generally too hungry to care whether people thought me stupid or not, so I did not feel afraid, except on the wet days—and, somehow, on the wet days no one else seemed to want to talk either."

"It is a curious thing," said the engaged girl, "but very few people can talk generally in wet weather. That is how friendships are made in wet weather, parties break into couples and tell each other all their troubles."

"Who is talking about telling troubles," asked the girl of three seasons, who had come in late. "I think people who tell their troubles should never be asked to house parties. You know where I have been staying, in a big country vicarage, where the girls quarrelled; whenever any two quarrelled one would go and tell her griefs to some visitor, and secure an ally. By the time she had won the sympathy of the ally to such an extent that it showed in her bearing towards her and the other party to the quarrel, the two quarrellers would make it up, and the unhappy sympathiser would be in disgrace with both of them. I think I was the only member of the party who was not dragged into some trivial quarrel, and left then, so to speak, when the two concerned came out of it with their arms round each other's waists,

but then I have the reputation in that house of being a cold-hearted, unsympathetic person, who takes no one's troubles seriously."

"We didn't mean troubles of that kind, which no well-bred person over fifteen can ever be forgiven for telling to people whom they don't concern," said the chaperon. "but—but the troublous grief and troubles we all find out that we have experienced on a wet day, and, talking of troubles, the worst holiday trouble I know of is losing one's luggage. I have been to a good many house parties in my time, but scarcely remember one when some unlucky guest did not manage to arrive with nothing but her wrap-case or hand-bag, and have to make her first appearance in a travelling dress, or borrowed clothes, which refused to look as if they belonged to her."

"It is horrid," said the bride. "I did it when first I visited my husband's people. I hated the idea of borrowed clothes, one never feels oneself in them, so I was in my travelling dress, and no amount of talking and hair-dressing would have made me feel anything but dull and dowdy in them. I was almost as shy as Lily then, and I don't think I ever quite got over the bad impression I made then."

"I wish someone would invent a 'pocket-gown,'" said the engaged girl, "something that would fold up in sections, and open with a spring when it was wanted."

"I have been turning it over in my mind," said the chaperon. "I believe it could be done, but it could not be done cheaply, because the material must be one which will not crush. A very good brocade will do. It must be picturesque, not fashionable, so that it can dispense with bones, and puffs, and godits, and unlined, so that I can roll it up instead of folding it, and it will take less room than an ordinary frilled petticoat. The sleeves shall be of old lace, so that they will not depend for their beauty on freshness. I will never be separated from it when I travel, even if I have to put it in a big underpocket, such as our grandmothers used to wear, and

THE BROWN OWL.

I will never wear it except in an emergency. Next month I will try to show you a picture of it."

NORA VYNNE.

THE aphorisms of our recent guest, Li Hung Chang, would fill a volume; some of them are witty, some are obvious, but they all show keen observation and shrewd common-sense, and have more the sound of Western tolerance than of Celestial conservatism. The Americans have collected many of his sayings, during his visit to the States, among which are the following:—

"Twisted truth is worse than lies."

"A woman can afford to be capricious as long as she is young."

"We have no 'new women' in China: we kill them off when they are born."

"Bicycles are not meant for women: they are immodest."

"Lawyers can prove anything, and will be ready to furnish the necessary proofs."

"Every woman should get married."

"A woman will be happier with a good husband than alone."

"In Europe the railroad people tell me that all the accidents happen in America."

"The American women are bright and vivacious, and I like them."

"When a woman reaches forty, she will find that she cannot make the conquests she did at thirty."

MESSRS. W. R. CHAMBERS have just produced in book-form, Miss Agnes Giberne's charming story, *The Girl at the Dower House, and Afterwards*. Our readers, who will remember the first part of it which appeared in our last volume, will be glad to continue their acquaintance with those fascinating creations, Rhea and Ursula.

THAT the work of the Reading Union bears good fruit is shown in the fact that it can reckon among its past and present members many of the younger writers who have gained for themselves an honourable niche in the literature of the day. One name which comes prominently before us at the present date is Miss Nora Hopper. Her first volume, *Ballads in Prose*, at once met with un-

qualified praise from the critics, and placed her permanently among the brilliant school of young Ireland. She has now followed up this success with a volume of poems, *Under quicken Boughs* (John Lane, 5s. net.), which will more than sustain the reputation she has won. There is an ease and sweetness of expression in these pieces which suggest the poetry of the late Christina Rossetti, and yet is individual in every line. Miss Hopper has no modernity in her composition; her muse dwells in the dreamland of the Gaelic West, "Where the Atlantic meets the sea," with all its sadness, faith and mysticism. The following "Sighing Song," is a fair example of the whole book—

East o' the Sun, West o' the Moon,

West o' the moon, and far away,

Beyond the night, beyond the day

There lies a country fair to see,

With apple orchards green and boon.

Some day we'll travel there, maybe,

Ere heads grow gray, and lamps burn low,

Heigho, Heigho!

East o' the Sun, West o' the Moon,

East o' the Sun and far away,

The time is always afternoon,

The month is always early May,

And ships we never thought to see

Ride lightly in the bays below,

Green groves of elm and willow tree,

Heigho, Heigho!

East o' the Sun, West o' the Moon,

For happy hearts who enter there,

No discord spoils the idlest tune

Nor gray steals into golden hair;

Nor any hly fears the snow,

Unending noon, unending May

Yet love is shy of entering there,

And dwells where life is not so fair,

Far, very far, and far away

Heigho, Heigho!

Next month we shall have further Reading Union achievements to chronicle.

MESSRS. MACMILLAN & Co. have added three more volumes to their dainty "People's" Edition of Tennyson. *The Death of Ænone*, *Demeter*, and *The Spinster's Sweet-arts*. They are delightful little books in blue and gold, and very cheap at a shilling each.

A TALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

"IS IT EVER JUSTIFIABLE TO PERVERT THE TRUTH?"

THE subject for debate this month treats of perhaps the most vexed question in the whole code of morality, and, indeed, of one which is almost impossible to decide, but yet, strong as are the objections to this view, I venture to declare my conviction of the occasional justifiability of perverting the truth. The matter frequently resolves itself into this. Whether the reason, the life of a fellow creature, or perhaps the safety of a state is to be sacrificed to one person's sense of right, or whether it is better to give up our moral, as we would our physical welfare for the benefit of others. In any case where the choice lies between these two alternatives I believe it to be the nobler, the most Christian course, to sacrifice ourselves for the cause of humanity, of love, or patriotism. Opponents of this theory will probably accuse me of holding all means justifiable to a good end, and will declare I am a follower of those Jesuits who, when the Chinese refused to embrace the Christian religion on the ground that a true God could not be crucified, declared that tale to be a fiction invented by his enemies. But no, what I maintain is this. Let us sacrifice ourselves, concealing, or even perverting the truth when other's life or reason is pitted against our personal well-being, but when some vital point of our religion, or an essential part of our morality is concerned, then let truth, and truth at any price, be our motto, never to be forgotten, nor to be laid aside.

"A LOBSTER."

If it is the highest aim of wisdom to know the truth, if it is the object of the greatest intellectual endeavour to discover the truth, if it is the result of the strongest effort of faith to believe the truth, then indeed do we wonder that any can be found to justify the perverting of it. The search after some part of the truth has claimed many of the noblest struggles, physical, intellectual, and spiritual, that the world has ever seen and still there are many groping in the darkness of to-day who ask with the heathen governor of old, "What is Truth?" Whenever, then, any portion of this is within our reach dare we say that it is right to deny, pervert or misrepresent it? Truth is the great foundation upon which rests all wisdom, all reason, all knowledge, and you cannot take away the smallest stone from the foundation without endangering the whole fabric. We do not consider it fair that others should spoil our efforts to find out the truth; how can we then justify ourselves for trying to interfere with theirs? After all, it is but a grain of truth that even the best and wisest can know, the whole can only be

attained in the presence of the Eternal Truth Himself; Therefore, in tampering with it, even in the slightest degree, we must ever remember that we are trifling with the very essence of Him who said "I am the Truth."

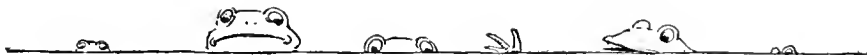
MAY L. HOWE.

CERTAINLY, in some cases. If a man does right to kill another in self-defence, he is equally justified in telling a lie in self-defence, particularly when he knows his enemy to be deceiving, or ready to deceive him. Truthfulness in speech is one of those fundamental conventions upon which society is built. If we could not rely, to some extent, upon our neighbour's words, social life would be impossible to man. But there must come occasions when this convention, like all others, is over-ruled by necessity. Every community leaves to its members the right of self-defence in the last resort, when its own laws are unable to protect them. But in all cases a direct lie is far more honest than any evasion or distortion of the truth. It is astonishing how people can save their consciences by using words not in themselves false, when the intention and the effect is to deceive. A deception is either admissible or it is not, but to take refuge in a *double-entendre* is to lie both to one's own conscience and to the world. As I have said, I believe there are cases in which a man may reconcile a lie to his conscience. But it is a weapon so constantly employed by knaves and cowards, that one cannot wonder at the social prejudice which will not let an honourable man make use of it without a feeling of shame.

IDA GRACE HYLTT.

No circumstances ever justify the perversion of truth, though it is sometimes expedient to *withhold* the truth, or a part of it, when no vital principle is at stake. In the glamour of the resultant good one is apt to overlook the crooked path that led to it, but one cannot, in calm judgment, advocate a single step out of the right way even if by that step one knows one can bring about good, for to an unhardened conscience the underlying feeling of having done ill would take away the benefit of the good. A longing for the truth is one of the strongest of the finer instincts implanted in us. Truth is the goal towards which all, in widely-varying ways, are painfully making. Truth being such a momentous power, is it not a very serious action to deliberately misuse it? It is impossible to foresee the end of one lie sent into the world (and what is a "perversion of the truth" but a lie? Not an absolute lie, perhaps, but "A lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies!"!). Our smallest action helps to form us, and a single untruth may lie at our heart as a rotten spot at the apple's core, spreading secretly till the whole fruit is spoiled. Let us leave undone the good that can only be accomplished by the sacrifice of that truth which a great thinker called "our only armour in all passages of life and death."

CECILIA SANDAS.



ATALANTA CLUB.

Subject for November: "Is Beauty a greater power than Intellect in a woman?" Papers must not exceed more than *two hundred and fifty words*, and must be sent in on or before November 25th. Prizes of five shillings will be awarded to each of the best four papers, which will be published in the body of the Magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

Describe an imaginary incident of a confession of murder. Give a critical estimate of the character of William Rufus. Write an original Sestina (example given on page 81). Essays must not exceed 500 words. All papers must be sent in on or before November 25th. Members may only enter for one of these subjects. Subject for the School of Journalism will be found on page 101.

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (OCTOBER.)

I.

1. A trumpet which signifies the Note of the Eagle—see Lalla Rookh.
2. The inhabitants of Hegay or Arabia Petraea, so called by an Eastern writer—see Lalla Rookh.

II.

1. Abraham Cowley. 2. At the Spread Eagle in Bread Street. 3. Whitworth Dillon, Earl of Roscommon.

III.

1. From "The Newcomers" (William Freeland).
2. "The Evening Cloud" (John Wilson).

IV.

1. "The Old Man's Song" (Milton). 2. "Funeral hymn" (Heber).

V.

1. Thought to be written by Sir John Luckling. Some, however, attribute the verses to Sir John Meinus, a contemporary poet.
2. Froll, according to the Chronicles, was a Roman Knight and Governor of Feats of Arms.

VI.

1. Sir Henry Wootton, Provost of Eton.
2. The Lady Isabella's Tragedy, from an old black-letter copy in the Pepys collection.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR NOVEMBER.

I.

1. Who were "Jemima, Rose, and Eleanor;" what poet has written verses to them?
2. What is meant by the Corybrechtan, and what legend is attached to it?

II.

1. What is meant by the expression "*Skool*"?
2. By whom was the *Legende Aurea*, or Golden Legend, originally written, and in what tongue?

III.

1. What is the inscription on the alarm-bell at Ghent?
2. Who instituted the famous order of the Fleece of Gold?
3. On what occasion?

IV.

1. What is the origin of the word *vanderlille*?
2. What are meant by the *Lavanges*?

V.

From whence are the following quotations—

1. "Emblem of Eternity,
Unbeginning, endless sea!
Let me launch my soul on thee."
2. "I stole along the flowery bank,
While many a bending sea-grape drank
The sprinkle of the feathery oar
That wing'd me round this lury shore!
"Time! on whose arbitrary wing
The varying hours must flag or fly,
Whose tardy winter, fleeting spring,
But drag or drive us on to die."

VI.

1. Who wrote the original of the Greek war song, "Sons of the Greeks arise!"?
2. Who translated it?
3. Who is alluded to in these lines?
"Weep, daughter of a royal line,
A sire's disgrace, a realm's decay,
Ah! happy if each tear of thine,
Could wash a father's fault away."
4. By whom were they written?

THE WHITE TZAR.

BY L. T. MEADE.

CHAPTER I.

WHEN Joyce Rodney became engaged to Brian O'Donnell, she thought herself the happiest girl in the world. She was an up-to-date vigorous-minded young person, with all the attributes of her age and day. Joyce had received a liberal education, and had used her well-formed limbs also to excellent purpose. She could play cricket, tennis, golf, could swim and ride, and was an expert cyclist. Her father was a retired General in the army, and Joyce was his only child.

The General was pleased on the whole with her engagement to young O'Donnell, who was an Irishman by nationality, and owned a fine, but somewhat tumble-down place in the County Cork. O'Donnell was a captain in a crack regiment, and was as gay, and cheerful and bright, and up-to-date in his way, as Joyce was in hers. It was impossible for anyone to be long in his company without liking him, for his blue eyes reflected his upright soul; and his merry laughter and gay wit were infectious. Joyce loved him as devotedly as he loved her, and did not think that she had a single drop of alloy in the cup of bliss which was held to her rosy lips.

"Eighteen years old, with perfect health—, engaged to the dearest fellow in the world and with my darling dad to pet and make much of me—oh yes, it is a joy to live" she often whispered to her happy heart.

Her bright face, her flashing, brilliant eyes, her young, erect, superb figure made her the centre of admiration wherever she appeared, and O'Donnell thought himself a lucky man to have secured so charming a girl as his future wife.

O'Donnell, however, had a craze of a somewhat serious character. No one thought much of it at the time, and Joyce was rather proud of her lover's Socialistic tendencies. There was another man also who paid her

most unwelcome attentions, but she did not allow this pinprick to trouble her much during the early and happy days of her engagement. She little guessed that the two facts which now appeared so insignificant were very soon to blot the sunshine out of her existence.

As is often the case in nature, clouds quickly covered her blue sky, and the petted and happy girl who had up to this period of her life scarcely known an hour's uneasiness, an hour's pain or an hour's sorrow, was placed in circumstances which require the nerve of the strongest, and the courage of the bravest, be that person man or woman.

It was in the early spring of this present year 1896, and Joyce was standing in a pretty little room off the drawing room where she kept all her own pet possessions. The piano was open, and she stood near it. She possessed a beautiful voice, and expected her master momentarily to give her a singing lesson. The song she was about to sing was placed on the music-stand, and her dark eyes roved eagerly over the words.

"Where shall I find a white rose blowing?
Out in the garden where all sweets be
But out in my garden the snow was snowing
And never a white rose open for me.
Naught but snow and wind were blowing
And snowing.
Now is winter and now is sorrow,
No roses but only thorns to-day.
Thorns will put on roses to-morrow,
Winter and sorrow scudding away.
No more winter and no more sorrow
To-morrow.

As she read the words she began to hum them, then to sing them half under her breath, then more loudly—at the last lines her voice full, sweet, and clear, filled the little room.

"No more winter and no more sorrow
To-morrow.

Her eyes grew misty.

"And I have never known sorrow," she reflected. "I suppose it must come to me some time, as it does to all mortals, but I am eighteen, and it has not touched me yet—except indeed that little anxiety about father—well, I may be mistaken about that."

THE WHITE TZAR

A step was heard on the stairs, she turned eagerly, expecting her music master to enter. Instead, however, the footman advanced with a telegram, ushering at the same time a middle-sized, dark looking man of between thirty-five and forty years into the room.

"Baron Lantz, Miss Rodney," he said, "and this telegram has just come, Miss."

Joyce bowed to the Baron, and taking the telegram opened it. It was from her music master, postponing his appointment. The footman closed the door softly behind him.

"I had not an idea, Miss Rodney, that you could sing," said the Baron. "I am both sorry and glad to have interrupted you. How is it that you have not made use of your voice before? You sing quite beautifully."

"I often sing for my father, Baron Lantz," replied the girl. "Will you sit down?" she added, a stiffness which she could not conceal coming into her voice.

"Thank you, but I cannot sit while you stand."

She drew herself up to a very erect attitude. The Baron fixed his deep eyes on her face, those eyes looked as if they would devour her; she met them—words of anger trembled on her lips, then with a half laugh she dropped into the nearest chair—he sat down immediately as near as he could.

"I am expecting my father home every moment," said Joyce. "Have you come to see him on business?"

"On this occasion I have come to see you, and you alone, Miss Rodney," was the reply, in a very pointed voice.

Joyce coloured, and in spite of herself, an uneasy look came into her eyes. The Baron continued: "He cannot lunch at home to-day. He begged of me to let you know. He will try to return in time for dinner, but if he should happen to be late you are not to wait for him."

"But we are going to the Latimers' to-night," said Joyce; "my father could not have forgotten."

Precisely; he has not forgotten. He told

me to say that if he should be detained too late he will dress at his club and meet you in Portman Square.

Miss Rodney rose impatiently from her seat, and walking to the window, looked out. The house she lived in was in a square in a new part of London. There was a large garden in the middle of the square. The house boasted of all possible modern improvements. As Joyce looked now into the garden she saw the snow falling silently in heavy, big flakes; it covered the ground in the central garden of the square.

"But out in my garden the snow was snowing,
And never a white rose opened for me"

She murmured softly to herself. She had scarcely repeated the words before a gleam of sunshine fell across the newly-fallen snow. She smiled when she saw it, and the intangible feeling of discomfort in her heart vanished immediately.

Baron Lantz, however, watching her back with extreme impatience, now came up to her side.

"I think you can guess what I have come about."

"I certainly cannot. I am surprised at your visit," was the impatient reply.

"Is that indeed so? I have taken this opportunity with your father's knowledge. Oh, you must guess my thoughts, Joyce—Miss Rodney."

"I cannot imagine what you have come for, Baron Lantz," replied Joyce, haughtily.

"You cannot imagine?" he said; "you cannot guess?" He turned an ugly green pallor as he read the hostile expression in her eyes.

"It is impossible for you not to suspect," he said then. "You must have seen—you must have known for some time. I love you, Joyce"—here his voice trembled—"I have loved you for a long time; I consider you quite the most beautiful woman in the world. I have waited patiently until the right moment came to tell you so. Now it has come; I can conceal my emotions no longer. I want you to become engaged to

me, I want you to be my wife—my Baroness. I can heap every good thing upon you, and I love you with devotion. I thought surely you must have seen all this, but—well, you know the truth now. You will be my wife, won't you? I can raise you to any position. You will love me back again, won't you?" As he spoke he stretched out his hand and tried to take one of Joyce's.

She had risen from her seat, and now moved back a few paces. Her face was as pale as his own.

"It is utterly impossible. I cannot listen to you even for another moment," she said, with a gasp. "My father certainly did not give you the opportunity you imagine. I am engaged to another. That fact alone puts what you say absolutely out of the question, but in any case, Baron Lantz——"

"Yes, in any case, let me hear you out," repeated the Baron.

"In any case I could not think of it, for I do not care for you. I could never love you, you are not, you are not——" Joyce's lips trembled, she lowered her eyes to conceal the tears which were filling them.

The Baron did not attempt to interrupt her. Having made his speech, which he had done with fluency and passion, he was now silent. At last he spoke slowly.

"I shall win your regard—in time," he said. "I am not surprised at your answer; it has disappointed, but by no means discouraged me. As to your engagement, that cannot possibly interfere with wishes such as mine. You are engaged to a boy, and you are only a girl yourself—pooh! I wipe such an obstacle out of my path: it does not exist."

"You are very rude," said Joyce, recovering some of her courage at this moment; "and I refuse to discuss the subject any further with you. I must now ask you to be so good as to leave me."

"I will do so when I have finished what I have come to say," replied the Baron. "I want you, Joyce; I have waited long and patiently for you; I mean to have you."

"I forbid you to call me by my name," said the girl, stamping her foot with impatience.

"You will be reconciled to all that by-and-by. What I require of you now is to listen to me and to allow what I am about to say to sink into your heart. I intend to be your husband; I intend you to be my wife. No one ever yet crossed my wishes without regretting it."

"If you do not leave the room immediately I will ring the bell and ask the servant to show you the door," said Miss Rodney, who was now white with passion.

The Baron raised one of his hands. "A moment and I have done," he said. "I came here for a purpose, and I will fulfil that purpose before I leave. You know exactly what I require. All that I say will come to pass—in time. Give me sufficient time, and you will receive my visits as a matter of course. Presently you will be engaged to me; in process of time also you will be my wife. You will bear my name and be my partner alike in my joys and sorrows. You will never regret that supreme moment. I wait for it—it will come. I do not intend to be disappointed."

"You certainly will be," replied Joyce; "but I cannot discuss this matter any further. Please leave me now—I wonder, for my part, that you have not too much spirit to torment me. Surely, Baron Lantz, you would not wish to marry a girl who has not a spark of love for you."

"The love will also come in the future. Just now, as you yourself wish it, we will drop the topic. You are aware of my views; ponder them. Everything that I say will come to pass. I will now wish you good morning. Oh, by the way, has your father told you that he goes to Moscow in a fortnight?"

"To Moscow!" cried Joyce. She was startled, surprised and angry as she had been a moment before, even pleased.

"To Moscow, on business for me. I have no doubt you would like to accompany him."

THE WHITE TZAR.

"I certainly should, very much. I have longed to see Russia for years, and this, too, is the end of March."

"It is; I suppose you are thinking of the Tzar's coronation, which takes place in May. I intend both you and your father to be present; you will see a sight, you will witness a splendour which you could never even have conceived. You will both enjoy yourselves. Remember, you go at my expense."

A haughty look curled Joyce's pretty lips.

"I think not," she said, after a moment.

"You cannot go in any other way. Your father travels on important business for me, and I naturally defray his expenses. He starts within a fortnight. Now, as I see my presence is disagreeable, I will leave you."

When he was gone, Joyce wiped some angry tears from her eyes.

"How I hate that man!" she said to herself. "How I hate, and yes, also, how I fear him. How dared he speak to me as he just did? How is it that father has got into his power. What did he mean by insinuating that father knew why he came here to-day? But there, why should I worry myself about him. I his wife, indeed! Never! Death in preference, but, oh! who can be coming?"

Joyce ran to the window; a hansom had drawn up abruptly at the door, a young man got out.

"Brian, by all that is delightful," cried the girl, her sorrows and uneasiness dropping from her like a cloak. "I did not expect him for a day or two; this is too delicious!"

She ran on to the landing to greet her lover, who bounded eagerly up the stairs.

"Brian, I am more than glad to see you, I have never in all my life wanted you as I do at the present moment. What good angel brought you back at this juncture?"

"Well, I had a bit of luck, Joyce," was the eager reply. "I had a telegram desiring me to return to head-quarters two days sooner than I expected, and now I have leave of absence for the rest of the day. What shall we do with it. Joyce, my darling, how excited you look, what a colour you have, and

how your eyes sparkle! Is anything worrying you?"

"Nothing now, Brian, nothing, as you have come back. Sit down and let me talk to you, let me realise that you are with me."

"But I must hear what is worrying you," said O'Donnell. "Remember, what troubles you, troubles me."

"It need not, dear," said Joyce, in a soft voice. "I was only bothered because I have just had a visit from that disagreeable Baron Lantz."

When Joyce mentioned this name O'Donnell's pleasant brow darkened.

"Has the fellow been calling here?" he asked.

"Yes, darling, he has only just left. You know he is a great friend of dad's. I cannot imagine what they find to like in each other, for surely they are as opposite as the poles. I really do think sometimes that dad is afraid of him, Brian."

"Well, well, you need not worry your little pate about the fellow," said Brian, smoothing Joyce's brow with one of his hands as he spoke.

"I hope not, and yet he did contrive to make me very unhappy. Half-an-hour ago he stood in this room, just where you are now, and he had the presumption, the audacity—oh Brian, Brian, I cannot say the words."

"Yes you can, darling, I must know all about them."

"He asked me if I would marry him—there, don't let us talk of him any more."

Brian put one of his strong arms round Joyce's waist, drew her close to him, and kissed her passionately.

"The man is insufferable," he said, "of course he knew that you were engaged to me. How dared he to make such a proposal to you?"

"I think he would dare anything, Brian. He made me feel very bad, almost creepy; he assured me that what he wanted he always obtained. He called our engagement a boy and girl affair, and said that some day I should marry him in spite of myself."

"Well, the fact is this, Joyce. You and I had better have our banns read as quickly as possible. I would rather wait for the summer, but if that man is going to persecute you, the sooner you are under my protection the better."

"It cannot be managed just at present, Brian, for father and I are going to Moscow in a fortnight."

"To Moscow, Joyce?" answered O'Donnell, staring at her in astonishment.

"Father goes on business for the Baron, and I go with him. But Brian, dear, you look startled, and not too pleased."

"Look here, Joyce, I cannot interfere with your father, but you had much better stay in England. The fact is I should be extremely uncomfortable if you went to Russia under the auspices of a man like Baron Lantz, and with his introductions. Nobody here seems quite to know what he is, or who he is, but I have my own private opinions on the subject; more I must not say."

"Oh Brian, you might tell me."

"I cannot Joyce, and after all I may be mistaken. But if it is as I fear I should be most uncomfortable at your going to Moscow. Joyce dear, you will promise me not to go. If your father must attend to this business, why cannot you go to Ireland, to my aunt, Lady O'Connor—she would be only too delighted to receive you, and they are having a gay time in Dublin just at present.

Say you will, like a dear girl. I earnestly wish you to oblige me in this."

"I am truly sorry, Brian, but I don't think I can."

"Not if I ask you?"

"Even so" she answered. "When I am your wife, of course, I will obey you in every thing. Oh yes, I promise to be quite an old-fashioned wife, and will do just what I vowed in church to do. I will obey my dear, good, manly husband, and I will love to do so, and will think all the more of myself

because I am a true woman in the best sense of the word. But, until I am your wife, Brian, I have got to look after my dear old dad, and I would not let him go alone to Moscow on Baron Lantz's business for all you could give me."

"I know you are as brave as possible, Joyce, but I don't think you are right in this matter" said the young man. "There, I see after all I must give you my pri-

ivate opinion with regard to the Baron. It is nothing more nor less than my strong belief that he is a Russian spy. Of course, I may be mistaken, but I assure you I am not without warrant in what I suspect. I wish you could persuade the General to give up this Russian scheme."

Joyce began to hum a gay air under her breath.

"But I should like to go," she said. "Bad as I think the Baron, I do not think him as bad as all that, Brian. Come dear," she



HE STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND.

added, "your prejudices run away with you. We do not even know that he has anything to do with Russia, except, of course, an ordinary business connection. And I have always longed to see Moscow, and if we go just now, we shall come in for the coronation. Think of that!"

"And I shan't see you for six weeks or two months."

"But when I come back I shall give myself to you for all the rest of my life. You must not be too exigent, Brian."

"God knows I don't want to be selfish," said the young man, "but I fear this Russian scheme. I do not like Baron Lantz; I don't like the whispers which are current in the city with regard to him. There is no being up to the man, he has an extraordinary influence over your father; you are right to be anxious about it, Joyce."

"I am, I am. I wish it might cease."

"Then induce the General to give up the Russian visit; let me have a talk with him this evening."

"No, no, Brian, it would do no good; besides it is arranged now, and you know my father well enough to be sure that he would never back out of any enterprise, once he had given his word to carry it through. I shall go with father to Moscow, and will promise to take the greatest possible care of myself. Now then, dear, don't look so melancholy. Are you not wanting some lunch?"

As Joyce spoke, she walked towards the electric bell, and pressed the button.

CHAPTER II.

The party at the Latimers' was a gay affair, and Joyce, in her white dress, was the centre of much attraction and admiration. Baron Lantz was present, and so also was Brian O'Donnell. The young officer scarcely left Joyce's side, and the Baron watched the pair from a distance. During the whole of the evening he never once approached Joyce, but she could scarcely turn without meeting the glance of his deep-set, keen, but somewhat

shifty eyes. Their glances made her uncomfortable, notwithstanding her great happiness, and had Brian then pressed the matter, she might have consented to use her influence to prevent her father carrying out the Russian scheme. Brian, however, had now persuaded himself that he ought not to interfere further, and when General Rodney came up to the young couple as they were standing near an open conservatory, and began to tell Joyce that all arrangements were made, Brian even congratulated him on the delightful time which was before them.

"You are quite right, O'Donnell," said the General, in a hearty voice, "this little girl will be the gayest of the gay. Baron Lantz is giving us some valuable introductions, and we shall be in the best set in Moscow. You can guess what that is likely to be just at the time of the coronation. My dear fellow, it is a pity you cannot come with us."

"For some reasons, sir, I wish I could," answered the young man, "but that," he added, "is impossible. I cannot ask for leave of absence just now; besides"—he paused and looked at Joyce as if he wished to say something further, but the words did not pass his lips.

"Well, we shall be back by the end of May, and then, I suppose, this child will be getting her trousseau into order" said the General, laying his hand affectionately on the young man's sleeve as he spoke.

Joyce blushed, and cast a loving glance at Brian, and soon afterwards father and daughter were driving home together.

Joyce lay back in the snug little brougham, she felt happy and full of content.

"You seem to have had a happy evening, my love," said her father, pinching her cheek gaily, when they both entered the hall of their beautiful house.

"Yes, father," she replied with a sigh, "I had a happy evening and a happy day. Everything is delightful to me just now."

"Then you are really pleased with the idea of this visit to Russia?"

"Delighted—the thought excites me beyond anything."

"Well, Baron Lantz thought you would like it. The fact is this, Joyce, he put me on to this business to a certain extent for your sake."

"For my sake, father? If I really thought that I should be inclined not to go."

"Nonsense, nonsense," said the General, in a somewhat testy voice. "There is not a better fellow living than Lantz; you have no right to talk of him in that tone. He admires you very much; there is scarcely anything he would not do for you; your antipathy to him is absurd."

Joyce coloured; for a moment she felt inclined to say something of what was filling her heart, but on reflection she resolved to postpone the evil moment, and wishing her father a hasty good-night, she ran up to her pretty bedroom. There, notwithstanding her fears, she slept soundly, and came down the next morning looking bright, young, and as if she had not a care in the world.

"There you are, Joyce," said her father, coming forward to meet her. "Well now, my dear," he continued, rubbing his hands, "we must both be as busy as possible, and first of all I must provide you with warm furs, for, end of March as it is, it will be bitterly cold during the early part of our stay in Russia."

"But we cannot afford good furs," answered Joyce, opening her eyes wide.

"Not really, but there are times when one must not retrench. The Baron, too, is doing everything in a very handsome style."

"I am not going to take his money; you will not let me travel at his expense?" said the girl, consternation in her voice.

"Of course not, my love."

The General shuffled uneasily on his feet, however, as he spoke. Joyce fixed her big eyes upon his face.

"Father," she said, suddenly, "there is something I ought to say to you."

"Well, love, say it; only be brief. I have a great deal of business to do in the city

this morning, and must start almost immediately."

"I can be quite brief, father. I only want to ask you a question. Did you send Baron Lantz here yesterday?"

"Did I send Baron Lantz here?" repeated the General—"well, of course I knew he was coming, Joyce."

"You knew that I must meet him alone?"

"You generally are alone when I am not in the house—that is, of course, when Brian is not here."

"You did not expect Brian here yesterday, father, for you imagined that he was still in Ireland. He came back, as it happened, two days sooner than we expected him; but you allowed the Baron to come, you knew I must meet him by myself, and, and—father, is it possible that you guessed what he came about?—he gave me to understand—oh! of course, it was utterly false, but he gave me to understand that you did know, father."

Joyce's face was quite pale now, her lips trembled, her eyes were brimful of tears.

General Rodney rose to his feet.

"My dear girl," he said, "whatever can be the matter with you? Why you are quite pale. Now tell me what possible objection you can have to spending half-an-hour with so gentlemanly a person as the Baron."

"Only I don't think him good. I don't feel safe with him. I cannot bear him."

"Oh, tut! tut! dear, you are prejudiced."

"But you have not answered me, father. Do you know what he came about?"

"Well, I—I guessed that he admired you, Joyce."

"He asked me to marry him, father. Oh, father! father! the shame of it!" Joyce covered her face with her hands.

The General put his arms round her neck, and drew her to his side.

"My dear little girl my pet," he said; "what can you mean by the shame of it? The Baron is a very great man in his own country. He made you an honourable proposal."

"But I am engaged to another. Father, if you knew it how could you let him do it?"

"Well, the fact is, Joyce, he would not be over-ruled by me. Of course, I told him that you are attached to Brian, but he insists on regarding your engagement as quite a boy and girl affair. I cannot help his views. He would not rest until he got an answer from your own lips."

"I see," said Joyce. She drew herself up and detached herself from her father's encircling arm.

"He spoke to me and he got his answer," she said; "he must never, never do it again."

The General smiled.

"All right, my love," he said, "now I really must hurry off; get your furs, prepare for your delightful visit. Forget Baron Lantz, if his ways and manners are not quite to your taste. By the way, Joyce, Brian will doubtless call to-day."

"Yes, he has promised to lunch with me."

"Capital! his presence will soon bring the roses back to those pretty cheeks. I must not have my girl looking careworn. If you go out with him, Joyce, just look in at Wayre's and choose a sealskin jacket and muff. Now I must be off."

The General quitted the room, shutting the door somewhat noisily behind him.

Joyce still stood where he had left her, gazing steadily into the fire; her face was pale, and the traces of tears were on her cheeks.

"No, I won't get those furs, it is all nonsense about my wanting a sealskin jacket and muff," she murmured. "Oh, of course I should like them, but I have a feeling about the whole thing which I cannot explain even to myself."

She remained thinking a moment, then ran up to her room, where, with the assistance of her maid, she began to overhaul her wardrobe.

"I shall want some fresh evening dresses when I go to Moscow, Harrison," she said to the girl.

"Yes, Miss; yes. Am I to go with you, Miss?"

"Well, father thinks it best not, but matters are not quite arranged yet. We are to go out a good deal, and I certainly shall want plenty of dress."

Harrison began to offer suggestions, which Joyce listened to. The subject of dress is fascinating to most girls, and she was soon intensely interested, and her sorrows had quite taken wings. She was still busily engaged when the footman came to tell her that Captain O'Donnell was downstairs.

"Delightful! The dear fellow has come early," murmured Joyce to herself. She flew downstairs, and throwing her arms round O'Donnell's neck, kissed him heartily.

"Well, darling, it is good to see you so bright and jolly," said the young man. "Why, Joyce, you look as fresh as the dawn."

"It is the sight of you then, Brian," replied the girl. "I was feeling quite anxious when you arrived, but now—the fact is," she continued eagerly, "I am not given to many words, but when you are there the sun always shines."

"How am I to pay you for that pretty compliment?" was the answer.

"By giving me as much of your time as you possibly can."

"I can stay with you until four o'clock, and it is not yet eleven. Now how are we to enjoy the precious hours?"

"You must come shopping with me."

"My dear Joyce"—Brian raised his brows

"you know, don't you, that I detest that kind of thing?"

"I am sorry, but you must come with me to-day, Brian. I have to buy all kinds of finery for my Russian visit. I want you to help me to choose some pretty evening dresses, and father says I shall require new furs, for it will be bitterly cold in Moscow. He wishes me to buy a sealskin jacket and muff. Oh, I know it is terrible extravagance, and I am simply not going to mind him."

"You must not attempt to go to Russia without good furs," replied O'Donnell. "Look here, Joyce, what is the matter? Why won't you get the sealskin? I don't think anything more becoming to a pretty girl."

Joyce coloured, and hesitated.

"I don't think father can afford it," she said, after a pause, "and besides, I am not quite sure where this money is coming from."

"Oh, if that is it, I quite go with you," exclaimed the young man, colouring high. "But I say, Joyce, I have an inspiration: I will give you the sealskin—it shall be my present. You know I have plenty of money. I don't say that I am rolling in riches, but I am comfortably off. Run, like a good girl, put on your hat and let us go out together."

Joyce smiled, and after a little more persuasion ran off to her room. They went straight to Wayre's, where Joyce tried on jacket after jacket. At last she was fitted with one which made her in O'Donnell's opinion look, not only the princess he had hitherto thought her, but quite an empress in her way. A cap and muff were also chosen, and the goods were ordered to be sent home immediately.

"How I shall love that jacket and that cap and muff," said the enthusiastic girl, when they quitted the shop. "I shall feel that they are all part of you, you dear darling old fellow. Oh, Brian, if you could only come with me, how perfect it would all be!"

"But I cannot, Joyce. Now, if the shopping is over, shall we go into Hyde Park? It is quite solitary in some of the walks at this hour."

They drove there, and choosing one of the more sequestered paths, paced slowly up and down. The day was sunshiny, with a little frost in the air. The snow, which had fallen yesterday, now sparkled like thousands of gems. The laden trees looked lovely in their snowy covering, and the keen elixir with which the air was full caused Joyce's heart to bubble over with high spirits.

"Tell me," she said suddenly, looking full into the eyes of her friend, "tell me why you are so much interested in Nihilism? now that I am really going to Russia I should like to know something about your views."

This was a topic after Brian's own heart. His face flushed eagerly, and his blue eyes flashed. He began pouring out an eager tale to his attentive listener, and neither of them perceived a man walking close by, until he brushed quickly past them, knocking against Joyce as he did so.

"Take care, sir, you are annoying this lady" called out the Captain in an angry voice. The man apologised, and shuffled off.

"Brian, I hope he did not overhear what you were saying," exclaimed Joyce.

"Well, and if he did, what does it matter, we are in a free country, thank goodness!"

"But is it true, Brian dear," said Joyce, resuming her conversation the moment they found themselves alone, "that you were very nearly arrested when you stayed at St. Petersburg two years ago?"

Yes, I had the narrowest squeak in the world. I was all but in the toils, and only escaped by the skin of my teeth. A fellow I knew lent me his passport, and I hurried across the borders under a feigned name."

"Oh! fancy your having run such terrible risks. Brian, you must be very careful in the future. Socialism is all very well, but if it begins to part us from each other."

"Never mind, Joyce, you need not have a scrap of fear. I am a Socialist, and shall be to my dying day. But I have you to think of now darling, and you may rest well assured I will run no risks, for your sweet sake. And, talking of risks, it seems to me that when you go into that country you run one far more than I do."

"Is not that rather absurd, Brian; all the English people who go to Russia are not in danger of being suspected as Nihilists."

"No, but they do not go under the auspices of Baron Lantz."

"Well, I shall be careful, and you know I shall not be alone; the dad will be with me."

O'Donnell was silent.

"I wish I could come with you," he said, after a pause, "but there, it is not to be thought of. You must promise to be very careful while you are away from me, little woman. Remember, while you are in Russia, the old saying that walls have ears, and if—"

"If what? Why do you pause?" asked Joyce. "Oh! do look round Brian, there is that same man; he has passed close to us again."

Brian turned, and gave the intruder a scowling glance.

"Come along, are you not hungry?" he said to Joyce. "Let us go to the Hotel Cecil, and have lunch there."

Joyce laughed and complied. "Now then, Brian," she continued, as they were borne along in a hansom, "what did your 'if' mean?"

"I only meant to say that I should much like to give you some introductions to special friends of mine—there is one lady in particular who lives in Moscow, but it may be safer not."

"Safer not—what nonsense; you must give me an introduction. Who is your friend?"

"Her name is Countess Tchernoff. She is very wealthy, and has a large house in Moscow; she also spends a great deal of time in St. Petersburg; she is one of the noblest women I know; I do not believe anyone suspects her, and yet—oh, the good that woman does, and the hope she sustains; but there, Joyce, you must not coax me to say another word. I should like you to meet her, but the less you know about her when you do see her the better, except that she is a charming woman and a special friend of mine."

"That is quite enough," answered the girl. "After all, I care nothing whatever about politics—even Nihilism, even Socialism—only interest me because they interest you. I belong to you, Brian, my heart is all yours. Yes, I should like to meet this Countess, because she is your friend. Please give me her address."

CHAPTER III.

The fortnight of preparation passed all too quickly. Each moment of Joyce's time was now occupied, for she and her father were going to Moscow in some state and even splendour. The General had obtained introductions to the most notable people in the Russian capital, and was quite determined that his daughter should have every advantage done to her really remarkable style and beauty.

The Baron was constantly with General Rodney when in the city, but from the moment of Joyce's rejection of him he had not again visited the house in Charlwood Gardens.

"Remember, I only bide my time," he said to the General. "I am doing a vast deal for you. After this visit you will be a made man, but remember the price."

"What do you mean?" said the General, turning somewhat pale.

"You know what I mean. I want your daughter, Rodney, and I am determined to have her."

"You cannot—you must be mad, she is engaged to Captain O'Donnell."

"That Irish captain is quite too insignificant to stand between me and my projects," said the Baron, with a round Russian oath. "You know the price, General. I offer to put you on your legs again, to pay your considerable debts, and to have you appointed to a high position in the diplomatic world. If you do not accede to my wishes, you get out of your scrape as best you can. Now, not another word, leave all affairs in my hands. Say nothing more to the girl at present. She knows my mind, and you know my mind. Of one thing I am firmly resolved, have her I will."

The poor General, who was devotedly attached to his pretty daughter, trembled and shuffled uneasily when the Baron spoke to him in this plain language. But by slow degrees he became more and more accustomed to the idea, and in consequence began

to be seriously dissatisfied with Joyce's engagement to O'Donnell.

"After all," he muttered to himself, "the Baron is right. How can a beggarly Irish captain compare to a man like Lantz. A man in his position—for in his own country he is evidently a very great person indeed, or he would not give me the introductions he does—yes, a man in his position can do anything. Oh, yes, I struggle under a terrible load. I wonder if Joyce really knew if she would refuse to aid me. Certain disgrace and ignominy must be mine if she does not yield to the Baron's wishes. But I will not say a word to the child until we have left this country. When once she is in Russia, removed from O'Donnell's influence—upon my word, he is a very taking young fellow, and I don't a bit wonder she loves him. I am as sorry as I can be to think of separating them—but, as I was saying, when once she is removed from his influence, she will not leave a stone unturned to save me. There never was a child more devoted to a father than my girl is to me."

These thoughts came to the General in the midst of his busy preparations, and at last the day and hour arrived when the couple were to start on their journey to the great northern capital. O'Donnell came to see them off at Victoria Station.

Joyce had never looked more beautiful than she did at this moment. She was wearing her lovely sealskin jacket, and the little seal cap seemed to bring out the many shades and lights of her lovely golden hair, her eyes large and dark in contrast to her bright locks shone now through tears. When Brian took her hand in parting, she clasped his convulsively.

"I feel frightened now that the moment has come," she said, in a whisper. "I wish—I do wish you were coming with us, or—or that we were not going."

"All right, Joyce, it is not too late even now," whispered Brian back. "You know I have had my fears from the first. Just be plucky, and tell your father you have changed your mind. I will see you off to-morrow to

Ireland, and my aunt will give you a right hearty welcome."

"No, no, nonsense Brian, what simple madness it would be: my ticket taken, and we just starting. Oh, I just had a momentary spasm; it is the pain of parting from you, dearest. But, of course, I shall enjoy the whole thing tremendously. I am looking forward to it as I never looked forward to anything before in the whole course of my life. It is just saying good-bye to you, dear; it has upset me for the time being."

"Well, God bless you, Joyce, God bless you, my little darling," said the young man a moment later. "Write to me soon, and give me your address."

"Letters will find us at the Hotel



"DO LOOK ROUND, BRIAN."

Moskovsky" shouted the General, putting his head out of the window as the train moved slowly from the station. Then Joyce also put out her head, and taking off her cap, waved her hand, and Brian's whole heart went out after her in a great wave of love and longing.

"Heaven grant she may come home safe," he murmured to himself. "But there, I shall really accuse myself of being possessed of nerves if I allow my fears to get the

better of me in this fashion any longer. After all, the Baron is safe and sound in London, and I suppose General Rodney knows how to take care of his only child. I am almost sorry now that I gave her Countess Tchernoff's address. The Countess is a charming, noble woman, but suppose suppose her leaning towards Nihilism was discovered, and my little Joyce, my darling, got into trouble on that account. One cannot be too careful in a place like Moscow; but there, I am getting fanciful again."

O'Donnell hailed a passing hansom, and drove straight to his club. There he sat down and wrote a long, very long letter to Joyce, in which he began to warn her against all possible and impossible dangers, and in which he once again assured her of his great, his undying affection for her. But when he had written it he suddenly remembered that it would be the reverse of safe to send it, as it might, and probably would, be overhauled by the Censor of the Press. He wrote her another letter quite commonplace and guarded by comparison, and when a few days later Joyce received it, she wondered what had come over Brian, and why he wrote in such stilted phrases. She little guessed that his heart was almost bursting with anxiety about her, that he was remembering, when too late, that he certainly had exposed her to danger when he gave her Countess Tchernoff's address, and that now it was impossible to warn her on the subject.

When the Rodneys arrived in Moscow they went to the Moskovsky Hotel, opposite the Kremlin. There a splendid suite of rooms had been ordered for them in advance by Baron Lantz, and there for the first time Joyce began really, as she expressed it, to see life. The General made haste to avail himself of the different introductions with which he was furnished, and in an incredibly short space of time Joyce's days were filled with a series of entertainments which seemed to stretch all over the twenty-four hours. Receptions, balls, luncheons, the theatre,

the opera, gave scarcely enough time for necessary sleep, but it was all so new, delightful, strange. For the first time she came into close contact with the foreign element; the gay life, the keen air, the freshness of everything caused her spirits to rise to the occasion: she laughed and joked. Her French was fluent; her German also fairly good. Her pretty eyes, her fair complexion, her bright hair, caused her to be noticed wherever she went. She had a style about her, too, which belongs to the best class of her countrywomen. Go where she would, talk to whom she chose, she was everywhere admired, petted, caressed. As she drove out in the afternoons in the handsome landau which General Rodney had ordered immediately on his arrival in Moscow, more than one person turned to look at the beautiful English girl.

Preparations were now in full and active swing for the great event which was to eclipse all others in splendour and regal pomp. General Rodney and Joyce were promised seats in the Kremlin for the day of the Coronation, and Joyce had ordered a dress from Paris for the magnificent occasion.

The General's business, as far as Joyce could understand it, appeared to be turning out all that was satisfactory; the anxious lines which had spoiled the expression of his face quite disappeared. He laughed and joked, enjoyed himself much, and became one of the gayest of the gay. As to Joyce, he could not shower sufficient love and attention upon her, and the happy girl thought assuredly that there was not one drop of alloy in her cup.

As the days wore on, however, and week followed week in rapid succession, she began to notice one thing, and that was a strange falling off in O'Donnell's letters. At first they had come with sufficient regularity, and although they were not quite so full of affection as she had expected, yet to a certain degree they satisfied her eager heart. But by degrees these letters lessened, and when she had been between three and four weeks in Moscow

they ceased altogether. Joyce now became seriously anxious, and one day, without consulting her father, she sent a telegram to O'Donnell to ask him if anything was the matter. The telegram was sent off, and she waited eagerly for the reply. None came, and her anxiety grew yet greater. Suddenly she remembered O'Donnell's friend, Countess Tchernoff. She eagerly sought for, and found her little note book, discovered the lady's address in Tverskoi Street, and as her father happened to be out, and she knew she had an hour or two at her own disposal, she desired the *concierge* to order a droski, and drove straight off to see her.

The Countess was a very wealthy woman, and lived in a large mansion in a fashionable part of Moscow. Joyce's droski drove in through large iron gates into a garden, and stopped at a door at one end of an imposing looking house. It had a long facade of marble pillars in front, supporting a huge portico. Joyce sent in her card, having scribbled O'Donnell's name across the top as an introduction. She had to wait for a moment, and was then ushered into a large vestibule. The servant asked her to follow him up some marble steps to a higher vestibule, and from thence she was admitted into an elegant but somewhat barely furnished room. A tall lady dressed from head to foot in clinging robes of black velvet came out of an inner room to meet her. She held out both her hands, clasped Joyce's, looked earnestly into her face, and then, stooping forward, kissed the young girl on each of her cheeks.

"You are welcome, you are thrice welcome," she cried, speaking in English with the faintest touch of foreign accent. "Oh, I know all about you, I have heard the whole story from my great friend, Captain O'Donnell. And so you are the girl he is to marry. Happy you! let me congratulate you from my heart. How good of you to call on me. I did not know where you were staying, or would have left my cards on you before now."

"My father and I are staying at the Moskovsky Hotel," replied Joyce.

"Well, I am very glad to see you, my dear, I must kiss you again for Brian's sake."

"And I am glad to meet you, Countess," replied Joyce. She looked full up into the handsome face of the older lady as she spoke, the Countess's great deep eyes seemed to pierce into Joyce's very soul. The girl's heart went out to this noble woman with a wave of indescribable longing. In some strange manner she began to want O'Donnell as she had never yet wanted him, to long for him with an ache which was almost a pain."

"Sit down on this ottoman near me, my dear child," said the lady. "Now let us have a comfortable chat. Take off your hat, will you not? He calls you Joyce, does he not? then I must call you Joyce, it is a pretty and a very English name.

"It is good of you to call it me, Countess," replied Joyce.

"Well, you see, my child, I know you so well. That good handsome Brian of yours has told me so much about you."

"And he has told me about you," said Joyce, in an affectionate voice. "Yes, he has often spoken to me about you. You and he are great friends, are you not?"

"Very great," replied the Countess with the faintest touch of a sigh, "I had a long letter from him only this morning."

"Did you hear from Brian this morning? Do you know that I really came to you because I was uneasy. I have not heard for a whole week. Then yesterday I sent him a prepaid telegram, but have not had a reply. Oh! Countess, how strangely you look at me! the expression of your face frightens me. Is there anything wrong?"

"Nothing whatever, my dear child." But the Countess continued to look thoughtful.

"Would you like to see what he has written to me?" she said, after a pause. "Wait a moment and I will bring you his letter."

She left the room, sweeping the long train of her dress behind her. She was absent

for a couple of minutes, and while she was away Joyce pressed her hand in a bewildered manner to her brow.

"What can be the matter?" she thought to herself. "He has time to write to her, but he has not written to me for nearly ten days. Oh, how frightened I feel. I suspect, I know not what."

The Countess came back before Joyce had time to think anything further: she placed a letter in the young girl's hands.

"Read it," she said. Her voice had many tones in it: it was full of sympathy, it thrilled Joyce's heart.

"Read the letter, Joyce," she said again, "and, remember, I consider you a most lucky girl."

"But do you really mind?"

"Mind? I am delighted. You ought to have visited me before if you were anxious."

"I was; I could not account for his silence. No one loved a girl better than Brian loved me."

"Than he still loves you, my dear Miss Rodney. He has written to me partly on business, but there is something also about yourself in the letter—read what he says. Yes; read all, all that you can understand. I will go away and return in ten minutes. You will like to be quiet while you are reading your letter."

The Countess once again left the room, and Joyce eagerly tore the letter out of its envelope, and immediately began to read. The contents were long, and the writing close and compressed. The letter was full of allusions which the young English girl could not in the least understand, but when she came to the last page she started, and a flush of pleasure came to her face: she was now reading about herself.

"I am all impatience till Joyce returns," said the writer. "I am anxious about her as you can well understand, but she seems busy, and is having a gay time. It is some days since I have had a letter from her, and her silence"—here followed some words in cipher. Then again the writing was compre-

hensible—"I wish you could know her; there is no one like Joyce on the earth. But, perhaps, it would be safer"—cipher was again employed. "Although there is no woman in the world who could do more for her than you could." The letter ended in a hieroglyphic.

As Joyce raised her eyes from the closely written page she saw that the Countess had again entered the room, and was standing looking down at her.

"Yes, give it back to me; it would not be well for you to keep it," said the Countess. "I know there is a great deal in the letter to puzzle you, and I must not reveal what has been said to me under the seal of secrecy. But now I have something to propose. You are anxious to write to Captain O'Donnell—Why not do so here? I can promise that he will receive the letter safely."

"What an excellent thought!" said Joyce, with excitement. She stood up, but then struck by a sudden fear, added abruptly—"What do you mean to imply, Countess? Surely my letters are not tampered with?"

"Hush!" said the Countess, laying a finger on her lip; "remember, nothing is impossible *in the country of the Czar*. Now not another word—not a hint. Come into my boudoir; you shall write there. Write fully all that is in your heart. Your lover shall read it."

Joyce followed her. He cheeks were now crimson with excitement, and a queer sense of fear caused her heart to beat loudly. The Countess took her into a lovely boudoir, where a bright English fire burned in the grate.

"Sit here, my love, and write—write fully," said she. "Tell him you are anxious to get back, to be with him once more. He is oppressed with nervous fears on your account, but he himself is safe and well—quite well—and his heart is all yours. Now re-assure him, for he has need of it."

"But you frighten, you terrify me," said Joyce.

"I do not mean to do that, but now that you have come to me I have resolved, even at risk to myself, to put you on your guard.

Stay a moment, Joyce; before I say anything further I must draw the curtain across this door. We all know that walls have ears in Russia, but in this special room we are safe. Joyce, you are surrounded by enemies. You had no right to come to Moscow."

"What can happen to me, madam?" asked the girl.

"That I dare not tell you. If you are brave and faithful, and strong, nothing may happen; but you must be all three; you must be also staunch and firm. My child, you are about to be subjected to a very severe temptation. Now promise me that you will not yield. Be as stubborn as a mule; refuse to believe what is said to you. Be firm, be firm. If you are, I am assured that nothing can really tamper with your safety. Remember, you are an English subject, and as such really safe. The worst anyone can do is to banish you from the country. Take this to heart, for I speak with authority. But also remember, they will try hard to frighten you. As soon as possible, Joyce, leave Moscow. Now I have said too much. Write your letter; it shall reach Captain O'Donnell."

Before Joyce had time to reply, the Baroness had quitted the room.

CHAPTER IV.

It was late when Joyce got back to the hotel Moskovsky. The streets were brilliant with electric light, and the great hotel with its huge restaurant underneath was lit from attic to cellar. Joyce drove to the entrance, where she saw her father, standing on the steps.

"Where have you been Joyce?" said the General, hurrying forward to meet his daughter. "You know it is not right for you to drive about alone. You have annoyed me very much by acting in this manner."

"I am sorry, father; I did not know you would mind; I simply went to see a friend."

"What friend?"

"Countess Tchernoff."

"Countess Tchernoff!" exclaimed the General. His face changed; he looked quickly round him, and dropped his voice.

"Come upstairs with me, Joyce," he said, "I want to speak to you."

They entered the great entrance hall, hurried to the lift, and were quickly conveyed to their own suite of rooms. The moment they entered their large and beautiful salon the General switched on the electric light and turned to his daughter.

"Now, what does this mean?" he asked.



"WALLS HAVE EARS."

"I don't understand you, father," replied the girl. She unhooked her warm sealskin jacket and flung her fur cap on the nearest chair.

"What is wrong?" she said, but she felt herself turning pale, and her voice slightly trembled.

"What is wrong?" echoed the General. "Heavens! child, you are enough to try

any man. Why did you go to Countess Tchernoff? Joyce, it is whispered but, there, I dare not say the word. Who gave you an introduction to her?"

"Brian, father. Oh, I assure you it is all right, she has done me no harm. She is a very charming and noble woman."

"Charming and noble woman," said the General, stamping his foot. "Joyce, this is madness."

"I know to what you allude, father, but I assure you—you need not be a scrap uneasy—the Countess's politics do not concern me in the least. I simply went to her because I am anxious about Brian. I have not had a line from him for over ten days."

"I fancy that can be accounted for," said the General. "Sit down, Joyce, I have something to say to you."

"Must you say it now?" answered Joyce, who feared she scarcely knew what, and had an indescribable longing to put off the evil day. "Surely it is almost dinner time, and I have to dress for the Orloffs' reception afterwards."

"Dinner can wait. I have something to say to you, and I must say it at once."

General Rodney, as a rule, whatever his private sentiments might be, always treated Joyce more or less as a child. She was much startled, therefore, now at the change in his manner. He had never before to her knowledge taken her *au sérieux*. What did it portend? Her visit to the Countess had already made her nervous and excited, and her face grew pale, and her heart beat more quickly than usual as she prepared to listen to him.

"Before I say anything further I must see that we are safe," he said. As he spoke he turned the key in the lock, then drew a heavy velvet curtain across the door. "Now I can speak," he said.

"But what is the matter, father; has anything happened?"

"A great deal has happened. Joyce, I am in terrible, in frightful trouble."

"Oh, my dear dad! what about?"

Joyce's whole face changed; she forgot her own anxieties in sorrow for her father. She went up to him, knelt by his side, and tried to put her soft young arms round his neck. He pushed her back.

"Don't, Joyce; I cannot bear even caresses at this moment. My child, I am almost mad. I can scarcely bring myself to say what I dread, what I fear. I have got into a terrible mess."

"But what about? Do tell me."

"That is the worst of it, I cannot tell you; to explain matters fully would make the danger all the greater. It threatens us both. Oh, my poor little girl! to think that I should have brought you to this."

"Whatever it is, father, I will try and bear it—that is," added Joyce, her pretty lips trembling, "unless it has anything to do with Brian. But it cannot; he, at least, is safe."

"Brian," said the General: "would that we had never known the fellow."

"Now, father, that I cannot stand. You have no right to speak against the man I love."

"I have every right, Joyce. It is because of him that we are in this trouble."

"But what has he done?"

"Well, you must be prepared for a terrible piece of information. Your lover is discovered to be in close connection with the Nihilists. Oh, I ought not to whisper the word here. Just on the eve of the coronation, too, the police are more actively on the lookout for suspected persons than ever. It is already known that you receive letters from O'Donnell—several of his letters have been intercepted, and some expressions of his have been even used against you and against me."

"Some of Brian's expressions used against me? Impossible!" cried Joyce. "I know well that he is a Socialist, but I am proud of him for his opinions. He espouses the cause of the down-trodden and the oppressed." She stood up as she spoke, and pushed back the hair from her forehead.

"I am proud of him," she repeated. "If that is all you have to tell me, father, the news is not bad as far as I am concerned."

"You would not care to see the inside of a Russian prison, would you, Joyce?" said the General. "My poor darling, you do not know what you are talking about. Girls as young and beautiful as you are Joyce have been secretly apprehended and carried away from all they love and care for; and men as old as your father, have had to bring down their grey hairs in sorrow to the grave, mourning for their children, or else going into captivity after them. Think of Siberia, Joyce, and the knout. Oh, my dear! the position is frightful. We are both suspected."

"If that is the case, let us leave Moscow immediately."

"Alas! that is impossible; we should not be allowed to do so."

"Who has told you all this?"

"A friend of ours."

"Who, father? Oh, I suspect; I guess—that awful Baron Lantz."

"He is a true friend to us both, Joyce."

"That I do not believe. I know he is our enemy."

"It shows how very little you really know about him, my love. He has thought it his duty to warn us of our great danger, and in the most friendly way. Do you know that the man whom you think so little of absolutely took the trouble to come all the way to Moscow for the purpose."

"He is here?—horrors!" exclaimed the girl. She turned her back on her father and walked impatiently to the nearest window. She could see across the street, right into the great Kremlin opposite. Her heart was beating tumultuously. She saw the scene outside, and heard the music in the courtyard, but without knowing that she saw or heard either. Her father came and touched her on the shoulder.

"There is no denying matters, Joyce," he said; "we are both of us in a trap—we are watched; we are in great danger or Baron Lantz would not have warned me. And you, my dear, have now set the final match to the mine over which we stand by visiting Countess Tchernoff. She is well known to be one of

the leaders of the Nihilists, and the police are only waiting for enough information to apprehend her."

"Poor woman!" cried Joyce; "how truly sorry I am for her; but, anyhow, father, my visit to her was perfectly innocent; we neither of us alluded to politics."

"That is nothing, my dear; nothing whatever. The fact of your being seen in her house is quite sufficient. You are in grave danger, and there is only one way out of it."

When her father said these words Joyce looked full at him.

"What is that?" she asked.

The General paused; he did not like to meet his daughter's clear eyes. He knew that he was about to deal her a blow. Nothing but the extreme entanglement of his own affairs would have caused him to say the words he was about to utter; but in his heart of hearts he was both selfish and a coward. The scrape he was now in was but the off-shoot of months of wild speculation and hopeless money entanglements. The Baron had slowly but surely got him into his clutches, and the Nihilist scare was all that was needed to bring the unhappy man metaphorically to his knees. The horrors of a Russian prison, of banishment from his own country, of ignominy and bankruptcy, all stared him in the face. Why should the happiness of one girl not be sacrificed to prevent such an appalling catastrophe. Besides, if the Baron spoke the truth, the girl herself must share her father's fate. Oh yes, the words which would crush her young heart must be spoken.

"There is only one way in which we can both be saved, Joyce," said the General. "It rests with you, my child. If you marry Baron Lantz, all is well."

"I will never do that, father," said Joyce, in a quiet but intense voice.

"Sit down, my dear, sit down; let me speak to you."

"How can I sit. Do you know that you have made me a dreadful proposal. I am engaged to another man whom I love with

all my heart and soul. I hate Baron Lantz. Father, how can you propose that I should stoop to the basest dishonour, and also break my own heart? Father, does this really come from your lips? Remember, I am your only child."

"Yes, child, yes; and my heart is torn by what I ask you to do. But we are in such terrible trouble, and it is the only way out."

"I cannot see it," answered the girl. "How can my marriage to Baron Lantz clear us of suspicion?"

"Effectually and thoroughly, Joyce, I must whisper something else to you. Baron Lantz belongs to the Secret Police of Russia."

"Then Brian was right," cried the girl.

"Ha! did he suspect that? no wonder. Perhaps he dreaded feeling the clutches of the Baron: he is likely to do so if ever he ventures into this accursed country. Yes, Joyce, Baron Lantz is a confidential servant of the Tzar himself. You must therefore see, my love, that the moment you become his wife suspicion is immediately lifted from your shoulders, and I, as your father, am reinstated in public favour."

Joyce wrung her hands.

"I see what you mean," she said. "It is all a horrible trap; but oh, I cannot, I cannot do it. I am engaged to Brian, and I love Brian. Oh, father, don't ask me."

"My poor, poor child, I will say nothing more at present. I know how this cuts you to the heart, but believe me, Joyce, I have heard things lately of O'Donnell which had I known at the beginning would have made me forbid your engagement."

"No, no, father; do not say another word. I have borne a great deal from you and for you, but this is the straw too much. I will not listen to insinuations against the noblest, the best man in the world."

Up to the present she had been composed, but now poor Joyce burst into bitter and hysterical weeping. Instantly her father was full of tenderness and compassion.

"There, my love, there," he cried, "I will not say another word to-night; you need not

give an answer to-night perhaps not for days: there is no immediate hurry. All that is necessary is for the Baron to feel that the case is not hopeless. We are safe just now under his espionage, but it was necessary for me to tell you what he expects, as you will meet him at the Orloffs' reception."

"Then I will not go," cried Joyce.

"Joyce, you must! it would be the height of madness for either of us to stay away; we must go everywhere and be seen everywhere, and as much as possible we must do this under the wing of Baron Lantz."

"Oh, what a miserable girl I am: why did I not take Brian's advice?" thought poor Joyce, as she slowly left the room.

CHAPTER V.

From that night the toils began to wind themselves round and round Joyce. Not that her father said anything more—he was, if possible, kinder and more tender to her than usual, but she knew that he was watching her face, that he was hanging on the decision which by-and-by she would have to make. She no longer felt free and gay; a weight of apprehension rested ever on her heart. The idea of her being seriously suspected of Nihilism was too utterly absurd to give her serious uneasiness. She was much more inclined to believe that it was a blind employed by the hated Baron, but she saw that her father, if not in real danger on that account, had got into some terrible difficulty. During the long hours of the night Joyce used to hear him pacing up and down the bedroom, which adjoined hers; he was feverishly anxious for his letters, but when he opened them an expression akin to despair passed across his handsome features. At meals he scarcely ate, but he drank wine feverishly, and under the influence of champagne was often again gay and talkative. But Joyce, who knew him well, perceived that his laughter was forced, and his smiles mechanical. The misery which she could not

but perceive was eating into his heart, was all too surely reflected in her own.

The pair still went out as much as ever, and now on all possible occasions they were accompanied by Baron Lantz. Each afternoon he sat by Joyce's side in the beautiful landau which he himself had provided; he drove with her through the streets; he showed her Moscow on a system and with a thoroughness which she and her father alone could never have attempted. He was actively busy with regard to the coming coronation, and Joyce and her father were provided with tickets for every gathering of importance, and even for the great state ball which would take place in the Kremlin on the night of the coronation.

The Baron never for a moment attempted to make love to Joyce—indeed, no one could be more deferential, more truly courteous than he now was; but all the time the girl felt that he was watching her as a cat watches a mouse. She dreaded meeting his glance; she shivered when he touched her, and yet he exercised a fascination, the terrible fascination of fear, over her, and she found herself impelled to go where he went, and to do precisely what he told her. In London she had thought of him always with distrust and a measure of dread, but never with respect or admiration. In Moscow, however, the Baron bloomed out as quite a different personality; he was evidently a person of high importance, and looked splendid in his official uniform. Joyce, for the first time, began to perceive that he was in reality a very handsome man. Now, too, he brought forth vast stores of knowledge and information of various sorts, which he poured at the young girl's feet; he gave her a deference which, although she hated it, could not but impress her. He let her see with a delicacy which few Englishmen could attempt, that he regarded her as a queen—that there was no homage too great to render to her youth and beauty.

About this time the General began to lavish upon poor Joyce trinkets of all sorts and

descriptions. He used to bring them to her in a half shame-faced way, and thrust them into her hands.

"A trifle, darling, that I bought for you to-day. Yesterday, Joyce, I saw this bracelet, and thought you would like it." But when he gave her the rings and bracelets, the chains and locket, he always avoided meeting her eyes, and she knew but too well that they really came from Baron Lantz.

This state of things continued for about a week, and then the Baron began boldly to offer Joyce gifts himself. At first these consisted of flowers and fruit, but more substantial presents quickly followed.

"I must choose your dress for the State Ball at the Kremlin," he said one evening.

"I have a dress which I think will do," replied Joyce, colouring, "I ordered it when I was in London."

The Baron asked one or two questions about it.

"It is a very beautiful dress," replied the girl—she remembered how she and Brian had chosen it together—"I think it quite suited to the occasion. I am young, and ought to be dressed simply."

"Excuse me, but this is a great state ball, and you must be attired suitably," replied the Baron. "Remember, you will be one of the most beautiful women present. You will represent England; you must do her justice."

Joyce did not say anything more; she managed deftly to turn the conversation, but a day or two afterwards a large box arrived from Paris which contained a dazzling robe of creamy satin, heavily embroidered with seed pearls. There was a long train, and a plume of feathers for the hair. The dress was both simple and magnificent, peculiarly suited to Joyce's style of beauty.

General Rodney stood near when the girl, with trembling fingers, took the robe out of its box.

"Who sent me this, father?" she cried, her eyes flashing.

"A man who thinks so well of you, my darling, that "

"Oh, don't say anything further," cried Joyce, with passion; "I cannot wear this dress. I won't accept it."

"Joyce, you must. It would be sheer madness to refuse. For God's sake, my dear, even if you do not marry the Baron, you must keep up the horrible farce for a few days longer until the Coronation and the State Ball are over. As long as the Baron thinks he has any chance of you, he will do nothing whatever to draw suspicion upon us; but if that hope is withdrawn, there is no saying what steps he may feel himself compelled to take. Please understand that as long as we are seen in his company we are safe. For my sake, if not for your own, do not attempt to send back the dress."

"Oh, father, how I hate it all! I am the most miserable girl in the world," said Joyce.

"Not so loud, my darling, not so loud."

"Father," said the poor girl, "can I never speak to you? I feel as if I were being tied round by fetters, and oh! it is such a long time since I heard from Brian. My heart is simply breaking. What can be the matter? Oh, how I wish I were back in England!"

"I wish you were, Joyce, for some reasons. But as you are here you must make the best of the present position. The fact is, you have conceived an altogether false estimation of that young man to whom you are engaged. I have heard rumours lately that he is consoling himself very happily elsewhere."

"That insinuation is too cruel, father. Do you think I believe you? The idea of Brian ever thinking of anyone but me why, it nearly makes me laugh."

Joyce gave a hollow little laugh as she spoke, and thrusting the dress ruthlessly back into its box, pushed it into a big wardrobe which was sunk into the wall of her bedroom.

"There," she said, "if I must keep it, I must, but after the Coronation and the Ball,

let us go back to England. Promise me, father, promise me."

"Yes, my child, I will do my best to get away when all the state ceremonies are over. Thank you, Joyce, for accepting the dress."

"My heart is like lead, father. I do not know myself for the happy girl who used to feel so childlike and gay at dear Charlwood Gardens."

"You will be happy and gay once again. There is some way out of all this misery; but patience, patience for the present."

"I don't mind what way we have out of it, if only you will not force me to marry Baron Lantz," cried Joyce.

"I will try not to force your heart, Joyce, only have patience."

"Ah, there is a dear old dad. Now I can smile once again."

It wanted, at this time, but three days to the Coronation. The Emperor and Empress had already arrived, and the place was one mad scene of excitement, congratulation, festivity, and joy.

On the evening before the great event Joyce found herself alone for a few minutes. She was feeling tired and desperate. She fully believed that Brian's letters were all intercepted at the Post Office. Doubtless Brian's name was enrolled in the list of suspected persons kept at the bureau of the police, his letters would, therefore, not be forwarded to Joyce, but surely his telegrams—they must be innocent and safe. Why had she never received an answer to the one she had sent him in such anguish of heart? Then, why did he not reply to the letter which she had forwarded through Countess Tchernoff? The Countess had, of course, ways and means of communicating with the young man, and Joyce was fully convinced that if an answer had come to her letter the Countess would have found some method of conveying it to the hotel Moskovsky. No letter, however, had arrived—not a message, not a sign. The Countess herself, too, had promised to call upon

Joyce, but she had not done so, and the silence with regard to the man she loved best was causing the heaviest burden of all to rest upon the young girl's heart.

As she stood now in the entrance hall of the hotel she looked hastily at a clock which hung just over her head. Her father and the Baron had gone to a distant part of Moscow on a sight-seeing expedition, and Joyce did not expect them back for the present. It was a desperate thing, but she would do it. Once more she desired the concierge to hire a droski, and ordered the man to drive her to Countess Tchernoff's address in Tverskoi Street. The drive was a short one, as this fashionable part of Moscow was within a stone's throw of the big hotel. Once again the droski drove in at the gates, passed through the carefully-kept garden, and drew up at the entrance door. Joyce eagerly alighted, ran up the steps, and sounded the bell. She had already learned a few words of Russian, and when a grave-looking man, after a moment's delay, replied to her summons, she spoke to him in that tongue.

"*Domu Grafini Tchernoff?*" (Is Countess Tchernoff at home?)

"*Grafini otyakala*" (the Countess has gone away) was the instant reply.

This answer astonished Joyce, and also frightened her; there was something also in the man's voice, in the wooden expression of his face, which caused a faint terror at her heart. Why should the Countess leave Moscow at so gay, so brilliant a time? When Joyce had last visited her she had spoken with enthusiasm of the Coronation. Well, there was evidently nothing more to be got out of the servant. Joyce returned to her droski, and drove back to the Moskovsky Hotel. She went up at once to her father's salon, and throwing herself into an easy chair, tried to calm her troubled heart. She was not there many moments before the General burst into the room.

"Have you heard the news?" he asked, in excitement.

"No—what?" she replied.

"Countess Tchernoff has been apprehended by the secret police."

"No, father—no! Oh, surely, father, surely not that."

"Good gracious, Joyce! don't take it to heart in that manner. You will ruin us both if you show the least serap of sympathy. The event is known to many. The Countess has been apprehended, and also several other Nihilist leaders. Now not another word, my dear. The Baron will be here immediately ;



"INTO A QUIETER ROOM."

he is coming to dine with us."

General Rodney placed a finger on his lips, and Joyce did not dare to mention that she had gone a few minutes before on a secret visit to the Countess. She only trusted that neither her father nor Baron Lantz would discover this.

THE WHITE TZAR.

CHAPTER VI.

The next day was the famous 25th of May, when the Tzar of all the Russias was to take his crown. In spite of the trouble which lay so heavy at her heart, Joyce could not help participating in the universal excitement. A brilliant sun was shining. The streets of Moscow showed every sign of an unusual festival. The sky was blue as blue could be, and the gaily-dressed throngs of people were abroad at an early hour.

Joyce and her father had tickets for the Kremlin, and arrived at the gates before eight o'clock. They were immediately conducted to the tribunes, or raised seats, which were provided for those favoured people who were to witness the procession. To Joyce, it was all like some strange and magnificent dream

a peep into fairy-land beyond the most brilliant anticipations of her wildest imagination. From her seat in the Kremlin she could not see the Emperor and Empress enter the splendid Church of the Assumption, but she had an excellent view of them as they came out again. With dilated eyes and bated breath she watched as they passed by the Emperor in his robes of ermine, the crown of Russia on his head, a sword in one hand, a sceptre in the other; the beautiful Empress, also in her robe of ermine, with a train of cloth of gold and a dress of cloth of silver, a small crown also on her head, and her hair arranged in two long curls. Behind them followed a brilliant throng.

The royal pair passed slowly from the Church of the Assumption into the neighbouring Church of St. Michael, where they were to worship the sacred eikons. The air now resounded with the noise of cannon, the cheers of the people, and the bells of four hundred and fifty churches. The medley of colour, the medley of sound seemed to intoxicate everyone. Joyce shared in the sensation of universal rejoicing, and, forgetting her sorrow, cheered with the loudest.

At last, however, the Coronation ceremony was over, and she returned with her father to

their hotel. She was now anxious to be quiet, but there was no chance of that. The Baron galloped up in his General's uniform. He came hastily to their salon, and insisted that Joyce and her father must come out and see the sights. He had his own open carriage at the door, and would accompany them through the streets. Joyce could not refuse; her father's face beamed with smiles; Baron Lantz was all that was courteous and deferential.

The day passed like a dream. Beautiful as it was, however magnificent, a thing to be remembered as long as she lived—there was a hollow feeling at the English girl's heart; she could not forget Brian; her fears about him seemed never to slumber, and she would have given worlds to be excused going to the Coronation Ball at the Kremlin.

There was, of course, no help for this; she, like many another, must play her part. At an early hour that evening she had to submit to the services of an able French maid. Her hair was arranged in the most becoming style, and finally the hated dress which Baron Lantz had given her was put on. When Joyce stood before her long mirror and surveyed herself in this stately robe, the strange sinking at her heart became greater than ever. In spite of herself, she could not but recognise the power which this man seemed to wield. His name was *open sesame* wherever he appeared. To Joyce he was kind with a kindness which she could not but be grateful for, but she also felt that in some indomitable, strange, unaccountable way he was her master; she felt that he was hemming her in and crushing her. All the same, she resolved to be true to the one man she really loved.

"I will be firm," whispered Joyce to her own heart, "nothing will induce me to yield."

Notwithstanding these brave thoughts, she felt bewildered, and her head ached continuously. Nevertheless, she had never looked more lovely than when she stepped into the salon to show herself to her father

just before they started for the ball. As General Rodney was gazing at her, pulling her about and examining her dress with critical, anxious, and admiring eyes, the door was thrown open, and the servant announced Baron Lantz.

The Baron was in his court dress and made a striking appearance. When his eyes lighted upon Joyce, dressed in the splendid costume which he himself had sent her, they glittered with a strange and eager light. He did not utter a word, but making a low bow came forward into the room.

"Is the dress all right, Baron?" asked the General, in an anxious tone.

"Perfect," replied the Baron, "but it is time for us to start; I have arranged to take you both myself to the Palace."

They went down in the lift; the Baron's carriage was at the door, they entered it and drove away.

The dreamlike feeling over Joyce became stronger than ever. Now and then she had to pinch her arm to ascertain if she were really alive. She was so dazzled by the splendour, she had seen so much, that she felt scarcely capable of taking in any more details.

"Remember, I claim your first dance," said the Baron, touching her hand, as they alighted from the carriage.

"Certainly, if you wish for it," she replied faintly.

Having been divested of her opera cloak by a lackey, she now found herself one of a long procession all going in a certain direction. A few moments later they had entered the vast halls of the Palace. Here the scene was animated and brilliant beyond description. Fair and beautiful women, men of all nationalities, in every brilliant and gorgeous attire, were to be seen.

By and by the Baron touched Joyce again on her arm.

"This is our waltz," he said.

She felt his arm encircling her slim waist; the most voluptuous music sounded. Joyce could dance beautifully, but not like a Russian,

who dances better than any other person in the world. The Baron seemed to lift her from the floor, she felt as if she had wings. Gradually she noticed that he was leading her towards a corridor, then out into a quieter room; they paused for breath at an open window. For the first time Baron Lantz permitted himself to look full and straight into her eyes.

"I have waited for this hour," he said, with a slight pant, "I want my answer."

Joyce gazed at him anxiously. For a moment she was overcome by terror, then her courage returned.

"I have only one answer, the old one, Baron Lantz," she replied.

"Let me hear it," said the Baron. His voice was icy cold, intensely courteous, but very resolved.

"It will not please you—it is only what I said before."

"Still I should like you to explain yourself," he continued. "Surely you must have the answer I wish for me now. The moment, the hour for which I have waited long, has arrived. I see my future wife, my bride, by my side. Joyce, I love you—give me back love for love, be my wife."

"I cannot," replied Joyce. "Baron Lantz you are cruel, you know I cannot do what you wish. I am engaged to another, I love another."

"Ah, so," replied the Baron, raising his brows with the slightest interrogative motion. "Then it seems I must still wait. The answer I desire will come, but this delay is wearisome. May I conduct you back to the ball-room?"

Joyce felt a momentary sense of relief; the Baron led her to a seat near where her father was standing.

During the remainder of the evening he watched over her with unflagging attention, but never by word, look, or manner, did he allude to the subject of his suit. He saw that she had refreshments, that she was introduced to some of the best partners in the room. Two or three times he danced

with her again. He was solicitous, almost tender in his attentions; it was as if he were her father, not a trace of the lover could be detected about him.

But Joyce's suspicions were not lulled by this apparent calm; she saw that her father was watching her with anxious eyes. Once the General went up and whispered something to the Baron, the Baron gave an almost imperceptible shake of the head. Joyce felt the toils tightening round her.

"Still, happen what may, I will never yield," she said to herself. But the tension of mind and body became almost too much, her strength gave way, she could scarcely dance.

"Father," she said to the General, "I am dead tired; can we not leave early?"

"We will go presently," replied the General. "Baron Lantz is to take us home in his carriage."

"But why so—can we not return in our own?"

"The Baron has arranged it otherwise, Joyce."

Before Joyce could reply the Baron himself came up to her side.

"You look tired," he said; "You would like to go home early?"

"I should, indeed," she answered, smiling gratefully.

"My carriage is at your service. If you will take my arm I will take you to one of the entrances. You will follow us, will you not, General?"

The General nodded, and Joyce left the ball room leaning on the Baron's arm. She was under the impression that her father was following her. When they got into the vast entrance hall the Baron desired a servant to fetch Joyce's cloak. He brought it quickly, and the girl threw it over her shoulders. The Baron now conducted her to one of the doors. As he did so he uttered a word of command. A servant in court livery rushed forward, and the next instant a plain but beautifully appointed brougham, drawn by a pair of horses, dashed up. The servant

flung open the door.

"Get in," said the Baron.

"But my father?" said Joyce.

"He is not in the hall; the carriage must return for him. If you are tired you had better go home at once."

Before Joyce could reply she found herself in the brougham, the door was slammed to, and the horses started forward. They drove through the Kremlin and out of one of the gates. Joyce lay back in the little brougham, breathing a sigh of relief.

"Thank God," she thought, "the coronation and ball are over, and now for England and home as soon as possible. Father has promised that we shall start for the dear old country almost immediately."

As these thoughts visited her she flung down the window of the carriage and looked out. The dawn was now throwing a tender light over the city; it was inexpressibly refreshing after the pageant of brilliant colour which poor Joyce had been gazing at since an early hour on the previous day. She put her head out of the open window to inhale the fresh breeze. As she did so she became conscious for the first time of a feeling of uneasiness. She did not know the part of the town in which she found herself; surely, too, by now she ought to have reached the Moskovsky Hotel. It was exactly opposite one of the gates leading up to the Kremlin, and although her carriage had gone out by another gate, she ought to have got round to the hotel by now. In some alarm she pulled the check-string. The moment she did so the brougham drew up by the pavement, and a servant got down and stood at the door. The man was in plain clothes, and gazed at her with a particularly fixed and determined expression of face. Joyce asked him in French where they were going.

"By the orders of the Baron, I am taking Madame to a house where she will have every consideration," was the reply.

"What do you mean?" cried Joyce, in terror. To her intense surprise and horror, the man calmly opened the carriage door,

entered, and sat down beside her.

"Madam had better submit," he said quietly. "I have the misfortune to inform Madam that she is *arrested in the name of the Tzar*."

The terrible words fell on Joyce like a thunderbolt. For a moment she felt faint and unable to reply, but then her courage returned.

"You must be mistaken," she said.

"Madam had better say nothing; the quieter she keeps, the better it will be for her. No indignity shall be offered. I am taking Madam to where she will be in safety. To resist is useless."

"Useless!" cried Joyce; "but I will resist. This is intolerable, insufferable. I am an English subject; I will call on the Consul to help me. Stop the carriage! I will get out here and now."

"It is impossible, Madam." The man stooped forward and whispered a word in her ear.

She started as if he had shot her.

"You resist at your peril," he continued. "If you do, your father's life is the consequence."

"Oh, my God! what horror is this?" thought the unhappy girl. And now in very truth her terrors brought on a brief moment of unconsciousness.

CHAPTER VII.

Joyce's faint was of very short duration. When she came to herself she was still in the Baron's brougham, and the police officer was seated motionless by her side. They had now left the more frequented parts of Moscow, and were evidently driving into the suburbs. After a time the carriage entered some iron gates, and drew up at the door of a very plain house. It did not, however, bear any of the usual characteristics of a prison.

"Where are you taking me?" asked Joyce, turning and addressing the man.

"Where you will have comforts, Madam. If you do not resist authority, you have

nothing to fear." He spoke kindly, touched in spite of himself by the pallor on the girl's beautiful face and the look of despair in her eyes. Her bravery, too, had impressed him, and, as he said to himself afterwards, he had never liked a job less than the present one.

The moment the carriage entered the little courtyard, a neatly-dressed girl, with a bright and pleasant face, tripped downstairs.

"Is that you, father?" she cried, "and have you brought the young lady?"

To Joyce's great relief she spoke in excellent French. She opened the carriage door, smiled at Joyce, and helped her to alight. They entered the house, and the English girl was conducted to a comfortable room.

"You have nothing to fear, Madam," said the other girl, speaking in a brisk voice. "My name is Nadia, and I am going to wait on you. The officer who brought you here is my father. You must be very tired; let me take off your dress."

"But I have no other to put on," said Joyce. "Oh," she added, "I don't understand this at all. Have I not been taken to prison?"

"No, Madam; by the Baron's clemency, not quite yet, and, indeed, I hope never. Now have no fear. The semovar is ready, and I will make you some coffee immediately; you must want it badly."

The girl tripped out of the room, and Joyce looked around her. She found herself in a large, prettily-furnished apartment, divided by a curtain, which, partly drawn aside, showed a bed and the usual requirements of a bedroom. The room was furnished with a certain amount of luxury, and pretty draperies were to be seen in all directions.

The day, although it was still early in the morning, already promised to be intensely hot. The sun had risen and flooded the room, and in spite of herself some of Joyce's heaviest fears were lifted. She approached the door out of which Nadia had disappeared, and tried to open it. It was locked, and the key had been removed. Then she went to the

windows, but found that they were heavily bolted, and that it was quite impossible for her to move them.

"Ah, it is a prison after all!" she sighed; "but what a strange one. What can this mean? Oh, surely it is a terrible plot to take the last scrap of resistance from me."

At this moment Nadia's steps were heard in the passage. She entered the room trilling a little French song, and bearing a temptingly-prepared tray in one hand. She laid it on the table, and then stood by Joyce's side.

"Will not Madam change her dress?"

"I have no other to put on," said Joyce.

"I think if Madam will look behind the curtain she will see that some of her things are here."

"But how is this possible," said Joyce.

"It is entirely owing to the clemency of the great Baron Lantz," replied Nadia, speaking in a monotonous voice.

Joyce gazed at her attentively, and thought she noticed a slight touch of irony in her tone. With a heavy sigh the English girl rose, and going behind the curtain, began to divest herself of the detestable ball dress. She came out again, in a simple dark blue costume which she was fond of wearing at home. When Nadia had persuaded her to swallow a cup of coffee she felt less nervous and more like herself. The sunshine streamed without, Nadia looked gay and cheerful. But the sense of being in prison, the awful powerlessness of her present position, the feeling that she could do nothing for her father, and did not know what indignities he might be submitting to, made poor Joyce's sufferings very intense, she resolved at least to keep her outward calm.

The long day passed slowly she was dreadfully tired, but felt too excited and too restless to think of sleep. She had no books, nothing whatever to divert her thoughts. At last she began to pace from one end of her room to the other, as she found it impossible to keep quiet. Nadia, who scarcely left her, became a source of fresh irritation; at last she asked her if she might

not have the room to herself.

When Joyce made this request the Russian girl gave her a long intense glance, sighed slightly, pursed up her lips, and then obediently went out of the room.

"I shall return in half-an-hour, those are the Baron's orders," said the girl as she did so.

"But why do you lock the door?" asked Joyce.

"By the Baron's orders," repeated Nadia. And now, indeed, the curling lines of her soft lips showed unmistakable signs of laughter.

Joyce looked at her with a bewildered expression, and when she found herself alone, burst into tears.

"Oh, what will become of me," she murmured. "How have I courage to endure this terrible ordeal."

The thought had scarcely escaped her bewildered brain before there came a knock at the door, then the key was heard to turn in the lock, and Baron Lantz appeared.

Joyce started up when she saw him, colouring crimson.

"What have you come here for?" she asked. "Why have you entrapped me into this place?"

The Baron, who was wearing his General's uniform, now unclasped the belt which contained his sword and flung it across the sofa.

"I have come for my answer," he said. "You were not ready last night, perhaps you are ready now."

"I was as much ready last night as I am now," replied Joyce. "I have only the same answer to give you; I will never be your wife. I would rather die. You don't suppose that you can win the affections of an English girl by the steps you have taken. You may kill me, but I will never be yours."

Joyce's fine eyes blazed with passion, her lips trembled, she no longer felt afraid. There was a catch in her breath, and a lump in her throat, but she would rather have been cut in pieces than shed a tear.

"It is easy to talk of death," said the Baron, after a pause. "To the young death always appears easy, but in this case there is no chance of that. No attempt will be made to deprive you of life, but there are other things—a long, weary existence in prison, followed by a fate far worse than prison, by an exile which may extend to the limits of your life."

"When you speak like that," said Joyce, "you exceed your power. You must know that you have no right to imprison an English girl. I shall appeal to the Consul—I am an English subject."

The Baron stared, and opened his eyes when Joyce said this. For a second she thought she read consternation on his face, but it quickly vanished.

"Be reasonable, Joyce," he said. "Come and sit near me, and let us discuss this matter. You are in extreme danger. Will you not sit on this sofa, and let us talk things over quietly?"

"I prefer to stand," replied Joyce. "I forbid you to advance one step nearer to me. You can say what you have come to say with this table between us."

"As you please, my pretty lady. I see you are not broken in yet, and I admire you all the more for your spirit, but a time will come when you will be only too glad to submit to what is after all a brilliant alternative. You are suspected with good cause. Your two secret visits to the Countess Tehernoff are known. There are also other things against you, for you have been in communication with a man who is under grave suspicion. I will not allude further to his name. You are in danger, and so is your father. It is true that your father has not yet been arrested, but unless you submit to my conditions within the next couple of days, he will certainly see the inside of a Russian prison."

"If it is like this——" began Joyce.

"Bless you, this is not a prison!" answered the Baron, with a laugh. "Did you really think so? No, I used my influence to save you from that. You are no doubt a state

prisoner, but under very special conditions. You little know what the real thing is. The fact is, Miss Rodney, you are weak, and I am all powerful; you had better submit, and without delay. Once you promise to be mine I can arrange matters with the Tzar, and your liberty will be immediately returned to you. As my wife, every shadow of suspicion will be lifted from you, and I—yes, Joyce I can make you happy; I can raise you to any position. At the present moment I am in high favour with my Emperor; he will grant me what I will."

"Then, if that is indeed so, be merciful, Baron Lantz; release an unhappy girl who has never done you harm; give her back her liberty. Let me return to England with my father, and I will bless you to the last day of my life."

As Joyce spoke she went on her knees, tears streamed down her face; she clasped her hands in entreaty.

"Get up, child," said the Baron, "you madden me when you plead like that."

"But will you not yield; can you not see how you torture me? You would be miserable were I your wife. I should always, to my longest day, hate you."

"Not so, Joyce. I am a strong man, and I should win your love. Before God, I mean to have it! I will have both you and your love. I, Baron Lantz, have never yet been balked in my desires."

As the man spoke, his face assumed an ugly pallor, he stared at Joyce as if he meant to approach her, but suddenly changing his mind, he turned on his heel and stalked out of the room; he slammed the door behind him, and Joyce heard him turning the key in the lock.

Once again she fell on her knees, and covering her face, burst into excessive weeping. Nadia found her in that position. The young Russian girl entered the room with her usual light step, bearing a temptingly prepared repast on a tray.

"Will not Madam eat?" she said. "Madam will make herself ill if she refuses

her meals. "See how nicely I have prepared this fricassé, try Madam, do try to eat."

Poor Joyce dashed away her tears.

"How can I eat, Nadia?" she said. "I am the most miserable girl in all the world."

"And one of the most beautiful," said Nadia in a tone of intense sympathy. "I wonder now if I could do anything for Madam."

"What do you mean?" asked Joyce.

"That I pity you, Madam."

"I am very grateful to you."

"I see that you are sad. There is a great honour about to be conferred on you, but you seem not to wish for it."

"Then you know all about me, and why I am here, Nadia," said Joyce, with a wan smile.

"Ah, yes, Madam; things are not hidden from those who have sharp ears and quick eyes. The Baron loves you with a *grande passion*. As his wife you will be great. The Emperor loves the Baron, he would do anything for him."

"I can never be the Baron's wife, Nadia."

"Ah, Madam, is that indeed so, and why?"

"Because I love another. Nadia, you are also a young girl—you must understand what love means."

"That is quite true. I have my Colia. Madam, with your permission, I will show you his portrait some day. He is strong and beautiful, and he loves me much."

"Well, then, you understand about me. You would not give Colia up, even for a great and powerful man who would raise you to a high position?"

"Never," cried Nadia, clasping her hands.

The Baron did not visit Joyce again, nor had she any news of her father. Nadia was her constant companion, never being absent from the room more than a few moments, and dragging in a mattress to sleep on the floor by the English girl's side at night. The days and hours passed with terrible monotony, and Joyce's face became pale and thin. She ate little and slept little; she gave herself up to long fits of

terrible brooding. Nadia, on the other hand, was full of excitement and gaiety. The news which she heard bubbled ever to her lips. The whole town was topsy-turvy with gaiety, and the Russian girl was anxious to enter into the sports as much as possible.

"It is too cruel about Saturday," she said, one afternoon. "Saturday is the great day of the Narodny Goularnia (the people's fête) given by the Emperor; gifts are to be distributed to everybody on the Khodinsky Plain. Colia, of course, is going, and I mean to go with him."

"And why cannot you go, Nadia?"

"I dare not, Madam, I am in charge of you. My father would be furious if I were to neglect you even for one half-hour. I must not go."

"It will be a great sight, I suppose?" said Joyce.

"Ah, Madam! I believe you; such a sight as has never been known in Moscow. Thousands upon thousands of people, and for each one a present; for each one perhaps two, perhaps three gifts from the great Emperor himself. You know it is his own fête, Madam, which he gives to the people; he bears all the vast expense; he does it all. Colia says he will try and get gifts both for himself and me, but he may fail, and in any case what are the gifts without the sight? I wanted to be there, to hear the bands play, and to see the sun shine; and then there will be all kinds of games and outdoor amusements. Oh, it is a most bitter disappointment!"

"It is very hard on you," said Joyce, "and more particularly as you could go quite well, for I would promise not to escape in your absence."

"I believe you, Madam, and would trust you if I had only got myself to consider; but, there, it must not be thought of. I have taken a vow that I will not leave Madam more than half an hour at a time. My father has made me promise, and I have taken a religious vow on the subject; I dare not break my vow, but it is bitterly hard all the same."

"Then listen," said Joyce, her face suddenly brightening. "Why should not you take me with you? then you should keep your vow and see the fête. Why should not I go, too?"

"But suppose Madam tried to escape?"

"I will not unless you give me leave."

"And to do that would be as much as my life is worth. No, Madam; I thank you from my heart, but I must submit. It is not to be thought of."

Nadia ran out of the room, as if unwilling any longer to dally with temptation.

Joyce sat and thought deeply. The idea of escape was always present with her. Suppose she really went with Nadia to the people's fête, and suppose some unexpected event transpired which would induce her companion to give her her liberty. At the worst, the walk in the open air, the sight of the vast concourse of people, the short absence from her prison would be something gained, and would help to beguile the weary hours. Yes, she would use all her persuasions to induce Nadia to take her to the fête.

When the Russian girl returned to the room, Joyce broached the subject once again.

"Does your father sleep in this house, Nadia?" she asked.

"As a rule, Madam."

"But not every night?"

"No, not every night."

"Will he be here on Friday night. Would he see us if we really went to the fête?"

"Ah, that fête!" cried Nadia; "the accounts grow more ravishing moment by moment. But it is not to be thought of, Madam; you must not tempt me. I have vowed, remember."

"Come here and sit near me, Nadia," said Joyce. "Take one of my hands in yours. What nice, pretty little smooth hands you have! No, I don't want you to break your vow. I want to go with you. You have promised not to leave me longer than half an hour alone, but I shall be with you all the

time if I go with you to the fête, and I will give you an English girl's word of honour not to leave your side until you yourself tell me I may do so. Nadia, I should love a little liberty, even for a few hours—with you as my companion. You would be kind and I should like the open air, and also the crowds of people can we not contrive this? Think what your lover Colia must feel at the thought of your not being with him on Saturday."



"IN THE HIGHEST SPIRITS."

"Madam, he is inconsolable."

"He would not betray us, Nadia, would he?"

"Is it Colia, not for worlds—he is all sorrow for you, Madam. I have told him about you, how beautiful you are and how patient. He, he *sympathises* with you, but I dare not say any more."

"And I need sympathy, Nadia, for I am terribly sad. To go on this little expedition would cheer me a trifle."

"If that were all you could easily go," said Nadia, in a reflective voice. "We

could each wear the dress of a Russian peasant, for I must also be disguised in case my father sees me—but he is on duty at the Kremlin both Friday and Saturday. If I were not a coward I believe it could be done."

CHAPTER VIII.

As the hours flew on, Joyce could not but perceive that Nadia was more and more in favour of the expedition to the Plain. She hovered round the subject like a butterfly round the flame of a candle. Whenever she left the room, she came in with fresh information. The Emperor's gifts were to be so wonderful. The fête was to be so magnificent. It was so cruel, her not being present, and then Colia wanted her badly—he was so keenly disappointed.

"There is nothing to prevent your going," Joyce would reply. "I can go with you, and thus you will keep your vow. I will promise not to leave your side unless you give me permission, and dressed as peasant girls no one will recognise us. Your father is not at home; our escape for a few hours will never be found out."

"It is true that we can come back quite early," said Nadia, with her finger to her lip. She sat and pondered deeply.

"You tempt me, Madam," she said.

On the evening before the fête Nadia came into Joyce's room in great excitement.

"What do you think," she said, "Colia has just paid me a visit—you cannot guess what he has come to propose."

"No; what?" asked Joyce.

"Why this. He wants us to do the very thing you and I have been talking about for the last few days. He wants us both to go to the fête. He says it can be easily managed, and he promises to help us. He is in a state of excitement about it, and says it would be cruel that he and I should be parted on such a day—the greatest day

of our whole lives, except, perhaps, our wedding day. To miss the Emperor's fête would be too cruel a deprivation, and then, besides, he wants to see you, Madam, you for whom he has conceived so deep an admiration. In short, I have promised to bring you to the fête, and he has brought the dresses that we are to wear."

"Delightful!" cried Joyce. In the excitement of the moment she threw her arms round Nadia's neck and kissed her.

"Then it is settled," said Nadia. "Now that Colia wishes it, all my fears have vanished. How happy I am!"

"And so am I," replied Joyce. "I do not know how to thank you, Nadia."

"It is Colia you must really thank, Madam; it is he who has turned the scale. Now let us arrange everything. We must start very early to-morrow morning. Colia will meet us under the shadow of the great water-butt at the right side of the Plain. Fancy, Madam—think to yourself—it holds nothing but beer to-morrow. That is by our good Emperor's orders. We must not be later than six o'clock in starting. Then, if all goes well, we shall join in the fun, receive our gifts, see everything, and be home long before my father returns."

That night Joyce could scarcely sleep. Soon after five o'clock Nadia brought in her peasant's dress. This consisted of a coarse, long, white chemise, with very full sleeves to the elbow, a crimson cotton skirt, and a brightly-coloured silk handkerchief, which was to be worn round the head and fastened under the chin. Nadia was similarly attired, her feet and legs being bare. In consideration, however, of Joyce's more delicate limbs, she was allowed to put on some easy shoes of plaited grass.

Thus attired, the girls ran downstairs and out of the house. The day was balmy, and the sun was shining. Nadia was in the highest spirits, and even Joyce shared in the excitement of the moment. Holding each other's hands, they passed the Warsaw Station, and continued their way along the

dusty *chaussé* until at last they saw at their left hand the vast Plain, with its rows of white sheds or booths, all standing out distinctly in the sunlight. The girls made their way towards these booths, where the Emperor's gifts were to be handed to the people.

Up to this moment Joyce's heart was comparatively light. The freedom of motion, the sweet fresh air on her cheeks, served to dissipate her worst fears, while as to Nadia, she was nearly beside herself with glee. The very sense of adventure which had caused the two to steal silently from the house but added now to her raptures.

"Colia will meet us by the water-butt!" she cried. "You can see it from where you stand, Madam. Is it not a vast structure? Oh, by the way, I must not call you Madam to-day; you must be Joyce, and I Nadia. Anyone will think we are simply two peasant girls. Joyce, are you not delighted? Is it not exciting? Is not this great fête the most wonderful and beneficent thing that any monarch ever bestowed upon his people?"

"It certainly is, Nadia," exclaimed Joyce, but the next moment her tone altered—she clutched her companion's hand and tried to drag her back. "Oh, Nadia, what an awful noise? What *can* be the matter?" she cried.

They were now on the Plain, and were rapidly approaching the booths. As Joyce spoke, a horrible sound fell upon both their ears—it rose high as if to the very heavens. Shrieks, groans, exclamations of suffering filled the air. The booths were already surrounded by a vast crowd of people, who jostled and pushed each other, and swayed from side to side like a wave of the sea. What could it all mean? In an access of terror, which suddenly seemed to clutch at her heart, Joyce again tried to draw Nadia away.

"What is the matter? What awful thing has happened?" she panted.

"I cannot imagine," replied Nadia, whose pretty face had also grown white. "But surely it must be something horrible. Oh, look, Madam!—Joyce, I mean. See the people! Heavens! what is wrong? They

seem to be fighting. Ah! one has fallen; it is a woman. And do you see that child—the child out towards the edge of the crowd? It is lying with its face downwards. It looks as if it were crushed—crushed to death. Oh, merciful God in Heaven! Look again, Madam; see that little one, it is being thrown across the shoulders of the crowd. Ah! some one has caught it; it is saved. And see once again; there is a man running from shoulder to shoulder, all over that crowd of people. See his face, note how he pants. Oh, the people are being crushed to death! Oh, Madam!—oh, Joyce!—what is to be done?"

"Do not let us go any nearer," said Joyce. She stood still, trembling violently. A terrible sensation, which made her both sick and dizzy, suddenly assailed her. The awful groans and cries continued. She turned her face away, unable to endure the awful sight. A moment later Nadia tapped her on the arm.

"Look up," she said; "see who are coming to meet us."

With a great effort Joyce uncovered her eyes. Two men dressed as Russian peasants were approaching. Their dress bore marks of a recent struggle. When they saw the girls they began to run. The moment they did so, Nadia uttered a glad cry, and rushed into the arms of the smaller of the two.

"Colia, you are here," she panted. "Save us, Colia, tell us what has happened!"

"Something awful, Nadia. My God! the people are crushing each other to death. They have surrounded the booths in such masses that the police can do nothing—hundreds are being killed, the life crushed out of them; but look, look at the English Madam."

Joyce's face was indeed the colour of ashes, but she no longer listened to the groans, nor heard the shrieks which rent the air; her eyes were fixed, at first in a dull sort of wonder, on the taller of the Russian peasants. Surely, even through this strange disguise, she knew that form. Surely the face was not unfamiliar to her. The next instant a voice she had thought

never to hear again sounded in her ears, and then she was clasped in a pair of manly arms, and then all in an instant her sorrows and troubles were lifted from her. Once more she was a happy girl, for Brian was with her.

"Darling, I have you again," he said, in a hoarse whisper. "We have no time now to delay—I will explain everything later. This good Colia has helped me. We planned that you should meet us here. There is a house not far away where you can change your dress, and, Joyce, I have a passport with me, and we can leave for England immediately."

"But how?" she whispered back. "Oh, Brian, I am suspected; I shall not be allowed to leave the country."

"You are suspected as Joyce Rodney, but not as my wife. I have a passport on my person made out for my wife and myself. You must return to England with me in that capacity, Joyce."

"But how?"

"I have arranged everything. On my way through Warsaw I saw the English Consul. We will take the next train there, and he will marry us immediately—I have a special license, there is no hitch. Now, come, we have not a moment to lose. Oh, I can tell you the story of my adventures another time."

Joyce felt her cheeks on flame, but her heart was now beating quietly. In the midst of the horrible sounds which rent the air, with the suffering and dying people around her, although she was naturally one of the most sympathetic girls in the world, she felt nothing, saw nothing, heard nothing, but the voice of the man whom she loved, and for whom she had suffered so much.

Half dizzy and fainting she was dragged from the outskirts of the crowd, and soon found herself on the edge of the Plain. Nadia and Colia followed the pair eagerly. Colia was talking to Nadia, who at first shook her head and protested, but finally

appeared to submit to what her lover suggested.

After nearly an hour's quick walking, Joyce and Brian found themselves outside a small house which stood somewhat back in a little grove of trees. Colia immediately unlocked the door and took the couple within. There a plain travelling suit had been provided for Joyce. While she removed her peasant's dress, Nadia stood by her side.

"Colia has told me all," said Nadia. "Oh, Joyce, what I suspected before, I am now certain of, he doesn't belong to us. I mean that father, I mean—oh! I dare not say what I do mean—only, only Colia is in danger, and I love him. He belongs to *your* friends, Joyce, and that is the reason why he was so willing, so anxious to help you. Joyce, I should like to say something now; through everything, under all circumstances, I will cling to Colia as you have done to your lover."

"Dear, Nadia; you will never regret it. Here is a ring, you must keep it for my sake."

Nadia looked for a moment with a regretful and eager expression at the beautiful ring which Joyce had taken off her finger, then she proffered it back again.

"Madam is good, and I love her, but I must not take the ring," she said. "My father will be angry with me to-night—at least I must not take what would seem to be a bribe."

"But you are not in real danger, are you, Nadia?"

"No, no, Colia will help to get me through, and I would do more than that for your sake. Now let me help you to dress. A train leaves the Warsaw Station within an hour, and you and the good, brave, Englishman, must not fail to catch it."

With trembling fingers Joyce removed her peasant's dress, and put on the simple travelling suit which her lover had provided. When she stepped into the little hall she found that Brian was also dressed once again as an English gentleman.

THE WHITE TZAR.

"Now let us start," he said, taking her hand.

"But my father," said Joyce, drawing back suddenly. "I dare not leave him in danger."

"Believe me, Joyce, he is in no danger. Remember he is not a Nihilist; he has nothing whatever to do with Nihilism. The person the Baron wanted was yourself. This

bye to these good friends, and away."

Joyce threw her arms round Nadia's neck, and kissed her several times.

Colia bowed low over her hand, and then with great respect pressed it to his lips. A moment later Brian and Joyce were hurrying to the Warsaw Station. They arrived at Warsaw without let or hindrance, and were



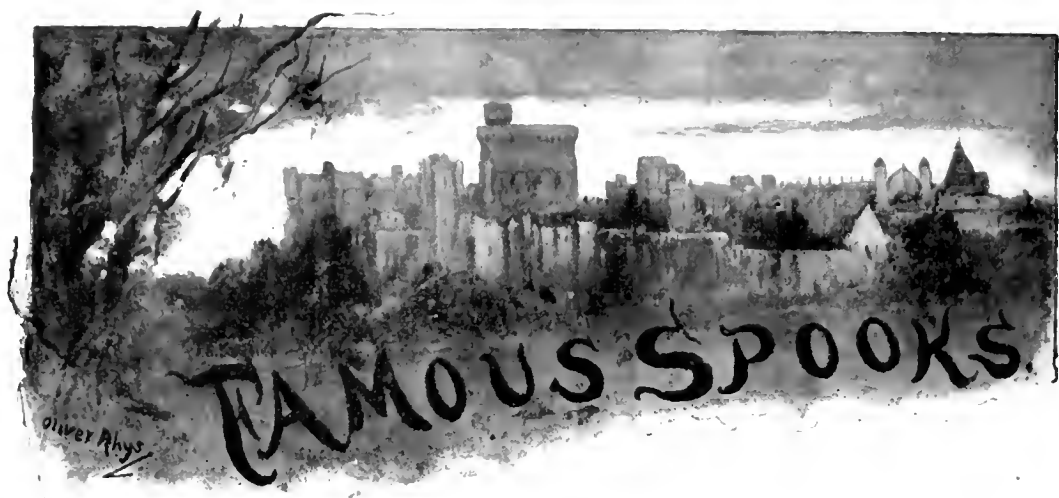
COLIA BOWED LOW.

was a cleverly laid plot to secure you, and it might have succeeded if some of my friends here had not put me on my guard. I came over only just in time. When the Baron finds that you are absolutely lost to him, for as my wife he can do nothing to you, he will let your father return to the old country in double quick time. Now, then, to say good-

married by the English Consul. A fortnight later General Rodney joined them in England.

Joyce is a happy wife now, secure in her husband's love, but she often wonders if the strange suffering she was called to pass through will not leave its shadow upon her to her dying day.





THE Spook is essentially aristocratic; he has as great a horror of modernity as a Castilian Don. He and the jerry-builder are in direct antagonism; we can no more imagine a self-respecting ghost in a Clapham villa than, to quote Ingoldsby, we can picture "Sandanapalus" descending to be "boots at an ale-house." No, he is distinctly exclusive. There must be an atmosphere of the weird and decay to tempt him from his retirement; there must be the hall-mark of Time upon his dwelling—a feudal tower, a crumbling manse, or even a dis-used church. His friends are the mid-night owl, the bat, and the silent moon; he will unbend to the nocturnal storm and will toy with the forked sheets as they blast the forest kings; indeed, in his lighter moods he will even condescend to terrify John Bumble with a lime-light effect from a tombstone when he would flee in horror from a Brixton clerk.

It is small wonder that so exclusive a temperament should have held itself more and more aloof from the flippant scepticism of the age. The *fin-de-siècle* mind has never got fairly in touch with the supernatural; even our very young prefer the marvels of Sherlock Holmes to the weird legends of Glamis and Dosmery Poole. Of late years, it is true,

there has been a spiritual revival among a select cult, and various communions have been held with the unseen, with satisfaction to both sides. It must indeed be soothing to these time-honoured apparitions to be once more approached with something of the old awe and deference, but the sad fact remains that many of our most reputable Spooks have declined the *rapprochement* and have elected to continue sulking. It is doubtful whether Herne will ever sound his horn again in Windsor Park, and the heinous offences of the "Demon of Tedworth" have become mere matters of tradition.

But now that the Christmas season is upon us, let us try for a while to be young again—
young in the full sense of the word, when the land of myth and shadows is as real as the great, throbbing, material life around us. Let us cluster round the tiled hearth and heap the fire high with crackling logs, which throw strange shadows in the ingle-nooks, while the wind shrieks down the black, open chimney and rustles the arras on the walls. Let us get very close together and listen with delightful dread to a few of the old tales that used to frighten our forefathers, till we dare not separate for the night. What pictures we shall see in the ruddy flames! Let us



BERRY POMEROY CASTLE.

first hie away to the far west, where, in one of the fairest Devon scenes, rises the ruin of Berry Pomeroy Castle. Its ivy-clad walls stand upon a very high bank, round which grow ancient trees and a river winds its way. In olden days there was a large oak-panelled room, with richly-stained windows bearing the arms of the owners. A dark staircase led from the right of the fireplace to some rooms above. In this dim chamber a horrible tragedy was enacted—no less than the murder of a child by its young mother, in a moment of wild frenzy. Her spirit at times would return to the scene of her crime; especially when death was about to claim some inmate of the house would she be seen approaching with arms extending in fierce remorse.

A famous occasion on which she appeared is related by Sir Walter Farquahar, a physician, some hundred years ago. When, as a young man, he was staying in the

neighbourhood, he was called in to see the wife of the steward, who was lying in a critical state. The doctor was asked to wait in this very oak-panelled chamber. The light was fading and the room depressing, so that he became impatient of the delay. Although he heard no sound, he felt some alien presence near him. Turning his head he saw a female figure coming towards him, well dressed, but in a fashion that did not seem familiar to him. Despite this, however, he took her to be a member of the household, and stepped towards her. She paid no heed to him, but hurried across the room, showing signs of acute agony. Her path led her to the staircase, at the foot of which she paused for a moment and then hurriedly mounted. Only when she had reached the top step did he gain a full view of her countenance: then he discovered that her youthful face still showed signs of great beauty in spite of the overpowering misery

FAMOUS SPOOKS.

which had set its mark upon her.

The doctor had little time to dwell on this strange apparition, for he was immediately called to the sick-bed. The critical state of the case absorbed all his attention for the rest of the evening, but he was rewarded on the following day by finding a marked improvement in his patient's condition. It was only then that he communicated to the husband the occurrence of the day before, and was startled to see the effect the story had upon the steward. The latter showed signs of great distress, and explained that the figure never appeared except to herald the death of a member of the household. The last time she had visited the castle was the day upon which his son was drowned, and now he could only believe that it foretold the loss of his wife. The doctor's assurances that all danger was passed, had no effect upon him; he had lived for thirty years in the precincts, and had never known the omen to fail. The stewardess died the same morning.

Years after, when Sir Walter Farquhar was a great physician, a lady called upon him, on behalf of her sister, who was suffering from great mental distress. They had been to visit Berry Pomeroy Castle, and had some difficulty in gaining admittance on account of the serious illness of the steward. While the sister was roaming through a large room on the first floor, she imagined she saw a young woman pass close to her, plunged in the wildest grief. His visitor, while assuring Sir Walter how utterly absurd she considered this fancy, told him that her sister was unable to rid herself of the impression the tragic scene had made upon her. She begged him to call and see her. He did so, and under his careful treatment she recovered; but he afterwards learnt that the steward had died while they were still viewing the ruins. This is the story of Berry Pomeroy.

Now let us borrow a broomstick and speed away due north, to the weird kingdom of Macbeth. On the bank of the Annan stands Spedlin's Tower. The legend dates from the time of the Merry Monarch, when Sir

Alexander Jardine, of Applegarth, who was then the owner, had consigned to the dungeon one Porteous, for the supposed crime of incendiarism. The Baronet's memory was not equal to his responsibilities, for on being summoned to Edinburgh he carried away with him the warder's keys, and forgot all about his prisoner. Not until he arrived in the Scotch capital did the sight of these keys recall to him the existence of the unhappy Porteous. He at once dispatched a messenger to release him, but too late, his prisoner had been starved to death. But after the dissolution of the body, the miller's spirit began to take vengeance on the enemies of his flesh. All the inmates of the Tower suffered in turn from his visits, and neither by night nor by day were they free from this terror. The power of the Church was at length brought to bear upon him, and a whole body of clergy solemnly exorcised the spectre, and finally confined him once more in the dungeon. But although his operations were restricted to this vault, his shrieks could be heard at night, crying, "Let me out, let me out, for I'm dee'in o' hunger!" If any daring wight ventured to thrust a twig through the keyhole, it would return minus the bark. A large black-lettered Bible, which the clergy had used when laying the spirit, was always kept in a stone niche as a deterrent. Even when the family had moved to Jardine Hall, across the river, the holy book remained. The importance of this precaution was shown when the volume was sent to Edinburgh to be re-bound. It was the signal for the spectral Porteous to break loose, and visit the new mansion with dire results. After having persecuted every other member of the Hall, he finally ended by flinging Sir Alexander and his wife out of bed. The hasty return of the Bible alone allayed the panic. These stories were told a century ago by an old woman of the district, who declared that, should the Bible be removed, nothing could prevail upon her to remain near the Tower. However, at the present day the book is preserved in Jardine

Hall, and the voice of Porteous is mute. Such is our degeneracy.

All who travel through Wales will be familiar with the fine Montgomeryshire seat of the Earls of Powis. It is a square, solid structure, standing out from a wide expanse of park. The gloom of the place has lent itself on several occasions to the supernatural, and several legends attach to it. But we will content ourselves with the tradition which stands upon the authority of eye-witnesses. Towards the end of the last century there dwelt in Welshpool a poor spinster, who earned a precarious living by occasional housework in the neighbouring mansions. It was in quest of work that she called at the Red Castle, as it was then called. The family were away at the time, but the steward's wife found her employment, and at night she was told that she must sleep there, as there was more for her on the morrow. She was somewhat surprised, not to say alarmed, to find herself in a very large, well-furnished room on the ground floor, and to note that the door was swiftly closed upon her with a spring catch. However, it is stated that she "had become serious under the ministry," and therefore took solace from the gloomy grandeur around her in reading the little Welsh bible she always carried with her. She was still so engaged, when the door was silently opened to admit a gentleman, sumptuously attired and wearing a gold lace hat. He seemed at home in the room, for he walked across to the high window-sill, rested his arm upon it, and deliberately watched her, as though waiting for her to speak. However, as words failed her, he left the room, pulling the spring of the door to, as the servants had done before. The poor woman was now convinced that she had been placed by design in a haunted room, and terror-stricken, fell down on her knees by the bedside to pray. Her nerves



SPEDLIN'S TOWER.

became steadier by this act, so that when the apparition again appeared she was in a condition to hold parley with him. She enquired the reason of his visit there, and he bade her take up the candle and follow him. She was led through a long passage to the door of what proved to be a closet. She hesitated to enter with him, but he urged her to do so, and to observe his actions. He then tore up one of the boards of the floor, and showed her an iron box with a handle to it, urging her to see that it was sent to the Earl in London. She promised to do this, and the



POWIS CASTLE.

apparition then left her. The spinster's nerves now gave way; she uttered a piercing shriek, which speedily brought the steward and the other servants on to the scene. As a matter of fact, they had been waiting near by to see the effect of the haunted house upon their victim. She could not persuade them to go with her to the closet, but at length the curiosity of the steward's wife overcame her superstition sufficiently to permit her to follow the woman and carry away the box. What the contents were has never been divulged, but it was of such importance to the Earl that he made provision for life to the poor old maid, who lived peaceably on his bounty to the end of her days.

There are many homes in the kingdom, particularly in Scotland, that are ruled over by presiding spirits, under the common name of Brownies. Their natures appear to

have been benign, on the whole, and their most serious pranks to have been at the expense of domestics and the crockery. One of the most famous of the species was the Cauld Lad of Hilton Castle. He is locally supposed to have been the wraith of a serving-boy, who was grossly ill-treated and confined in a cupboard, which the guide was wont to point out as "The place where they used to put the cold lad." The frigid epithet was suggested by his dead body being discovered in this cupboard. Another tradition of the Cauld Lad is, that he was one Roger Skelton who was murdered by his master, Robert Hilton, in 1609. The hot-headed squire, infuriated at the boy's delay in bringing his horse, had followed him to the stable, and with a pitch-fork dealt him a deadly blow on the head. The murderer then covered his body with straw and at night threw it into a pond, in which,

years afterwards, the skeleton was found. Whatever its origin, the spectre seems to have possessed a sprightly humour, for if the kitchen were left in a state of neatness he would proceed to disarrange everything and play havoc with the plates and dishes. But should the domestics have left, as they found it advisable to do, the kitchen in a disordered state, they would find it in the morning arranged in a manner to appeal to the strictest housewife. It was not by bell or hook the Cauld Lad was exorcised, but by the presentation of a new suit of clothes. The green velvet gift was too tempting to be resisted. On his appearance at midnight he donned the clothes, and was so enraptured with his appearance that he capered about till cock-crow, when he departed to the triumphant yells of the servants, who hurled at him the following couplet :

“ Here’s a cloak and here’s a hood
The Cauld Lad o’ Hilton will do no
more good.”

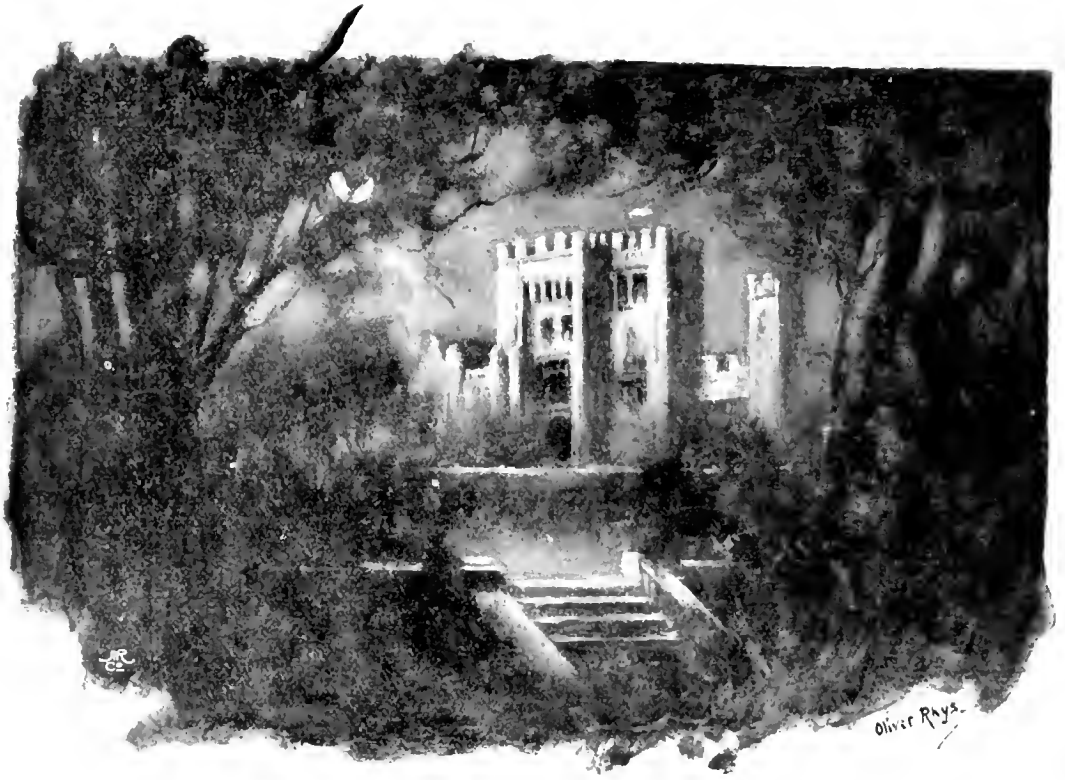
That he acted as a monitor to erring hirelings is proved by the story of the girl who used to drink the milk from the cans. Once, when at her practice, the voice of the Cauld Lad was heard saying, “Ye taste, and ye taste, and ye taste, but ye never gie the Cauld Lad a taste.” The denunciation was followed by the flight of the terrified wench, who could never be prevailed upon to enter the house again.

The last story which we will take before



HILTON CASTLE:

we leave the glamour of the firelight, and get back to the prosaic flatness of the nineteenth century, is associated with the fate of poor Amy Robsart. All readers of *Kenilworth* will recall that it was at Cumnor Hall, in Berk-



CUMNOR HALL.

shire, the supposed murder of Lady Dudley took place. If there was foul play or not will never be fully known, but the tragedy is none the less grim, whether accidental or coldly planned. According to Scott's version, the hapless lady was a prisoner in a lonely tower. The sole entrance to it was by a drawbridge, in the centre of which was a trap-door; any pressure on this would cause it to give way and the victim would be flung into a black pit. It was on to this trap that Amy was decoyed by the two confederates, Varney and Foster. But the more authentic account, given at the inquest in 1560, states that she sent all her household to witness a fair which was being held at Abingdon, and on their return she was found dead at the foot of the stairs. But so prosaic a version did not suit the bucolic mind. The country people preferred the more dramatic treatment of murder and the inevitable apparition to follow. It is a common assertion in the

neighbourhood that "Madame Dudley's ghost did used to walk in Cumnor Park, and that it walked so obstinately that it took no less than nine persons from Oxford to lay her." It was to "Madame Dudley's Pond" that the clergy consigned her, and this is proved beyond dispute, since the water was never known to freeze afterwards.

"And in that manor now no more
Is cheerful feast and sprightly ball;
For ever, since that dreary hour,
Have spirits haunted Cumnor Hall.

"The village maids with fearful glance
Avoid the ancient moss-grown wall;
Nor ever lead the merry dance,
Among the groves of Cumnor Hall.

"Full many a traveller oft hath sighed
And pensive wept the Countess' fall
As, wandering onward, they espied
The haunted towers of Cumnor Hall."

THE EDITOR.

I N SCHOOL.

II.—THE GIRLS.

UNTIL I went to school, I had never had anything to do with girls. My idea of them was entirely founded upon what Jack said about them, and as Jack had no definite opinions at all, but merely regarded the whole sex vaguely as inferior and not worth troubling about, I naturally had a good deal to learn, when Miss Strangways took me into the class-room and left me with my future schoolfellows. There seemed to be masses of girls everywhere, all apparently older than myself; not one of them took the least notice of me, and I wondered whether I had done anything to offend them, as I looked round in vain to try and find a friendly face. I had always imagined, from Jack's conversation, that girls spent their time in "fagging over their rotten lessons, just to spite their brothers," so that the irate parent might hold them up as examples to their more lazy sons, who, according to Jack, "knew better than to play so poorly, when there was something really decent to be done, such as"—here Jack usually became confused, "such as, *not* fagging over them, for instance." But here were girls innumerable, and their only occupation seemed to be incessant talking. I stared at them in complete bewilderment, and wondered what the world contained that could be discussed in so many words, and by so many people, amongst whom was not the leavening influence of a single boy. I was amazed, too, by the affection they showed for one another; girls walked about with their arms round one another's waists; girls called one another "dearest" and "*darling*"—there was always a strong accent on the "*darling*"—girls threw themselves with shouts of welcome upon every fresh arrival who came into the room, and the fresh arrival at once began kissing every one within reach, two kisses to each person, until I blushed to think what Jack would have said of it all, Jack who only kissed me three times in the year,

when he went back to school, and would shirk that if Nurse were not there to enforce the brotherly attention. Neglected and strange as I felt, I was at least glad I was not expected to kiss anybody, and I wondered if the day would ever come, when I should have the courage to call one of those dreadfully superior girls "dearest," and walk about with my arm linked in hers, and pretend that the new girls were not there at all.

"I say, what's your name?" suddenly asked one of the older girls, detaching herself from her particular group, and strolling up to me. The tone was aggressive, but I welcomed the friendliness of the intention, and faltered out my name apologetically.

"Been to school before?" was the next question.

"No," I said, still more apologetically.

"Governess?" said the girl.

"No, I have always been taught by my sister."

"Oh," in a tone of gentle approval. "Then you don't know much, do you?"

"Oh no," I assured her, heartily. I could quite understand her attitude of contempt towards the acquisition of knowledge, for it was precisely the same as Jack's. And my questioner actually condescended to smile, when she received my assurance.

"Got any brothers? Is he at school? Where?" she proceeded rapidly. "And what is he going to be?"

"He isn't quite sure" I answered, doubtfully. As a matter of fact, Jack's future vocation was a different one, every holidays. "Either an engine driver or a cowboy, I think."

She seemed a little surprised, and I took advantage of the temporary lull in the questions, to ask her for her own name. This she apparently regarded as a piece of great presumption on my part, for she resumed her aggressive manner, jerked out "Dorothy Pearson," and went back to her companions, who were waiting curiously to hear the result of her inquiries. I thought it would have saved a good deal of bother if they had asked me themselves, but after all, I reflected, some-

thing must be allowed for the stupidity of girls when left entirely to themselves. And I did not know until afterwards, that Dorothy, as head girl, was the only one present who could have been seen speaking to a new girl, without danger of losing caste.

Then a bell rang, and there was a murmur of "Strangles" round the room, and every one again began kissing every one else with great vigour; and Miss Strangways came and stood by the open door, and the girls filed upstairs to prayers. She, too, kissed them all as they passed out, and much as I pitied her for being obliged to do so, I supposed that she was grown up, and therefore used to kissing people, in which case she might not mind it quite so much.

"Well, are the girls at all like what you expected to find?" she asked, when my turn came.

"I don't know, yet," I replied, cautiously. "They seem to do a great lot of kissing, but I suppose they can't help it. They're just girls, you see."

"Yes," she said, gravely. "We must not forget that, must we?"

I wrote to Jack in pencil, with the bed for a writing-table, when I was left for the night in one of four curtained compartments in a large bed-room. And in the fulness of my heart, I wrote to him as follows:—

"There are awful lots of girls everywhere, and I do wish you were here. Miss Strangways is not a bit like a head-mistress, and she hasn't got horrid patronising ways, and she doesn't laugh when you say things that are not funny. The girls all talk without stopping, and they kiss one another for nothing at all, even when they haven't had a present given them, or anything. Isn't it rum? All the same, I think they are not *quite* like the girls you seem to know. None of them scream, or giggle, or anything like that, and I haven't seen one of them with a book, and they don't gas about lessons, as you said they would. They just kiss and talk, that's all, so, of course, they might be much worse. I will write every day. Give

my love to Simpson, and Wilkins minor, and tell Boston terts I have thought of a new name for his ferret."

As I crept sleepily into bed, a whispered conversation in the other part of the room caught my ear.

"It's all very well for you to be so high and mighty about rules," grumbled a muffled voice from one side of me, "you talk every afternoon at prep, and that's against the rules too, isn't it?"

"Nancy is always so fond of talking about her honour," said another muffled voice, from the opposite corner. "How about the day Maddy took us for a walk, and you cut all the crossings, and swung your arms, and got a conduct-mark, and Strangles lectured you before the whole school about the example to the younger ones?"

"That's different," said a third voice, which was not muffled at all. "I don't care twopence about the *rules*. It doesn't matter how often you break the rules, if there is a very good chance of your being caught; that's only fair. But we are put on our honour not to talk in our bedrooms, and they'd never find us out if we did, and I don't like the feel of it. So shut up, can't you?"

I was too tired to listen any longer, but I went off to sleep, meaning to add a postscript to Jack's letter, telling him that, in spite of the general inferiority of the sex, there actually seemed to be a sense of honour among girls, as well as boys.

I made many more startling discoveries about girls, as the days went on. For instance, the very morning after my arrival, I was unexpectedly addressed by a particularly cheerful looking girl, not much older than myself, who asked me if I would do her a great favour; and when I assented, feeling flattered at being noticed by anybody at all, she proceeded to draw a three-cornered note from her apron pocket.

"I shall be much obliged," she said, very impressively, "if you will give that to Nancy Waterhouse, and tell her that I don't expect an answer."

"Nancy Waterhouse? Why, she's over there, isn't she?" I exclaimed. "Won't it do if you tell her yourself?"

It evidently would not do at all, to judge from her expression, when I, a new girl, presumed to offer a suggestion; so I hastily did as I was told, and conveyed the note to Nancy Waterhouse.

"Who gave you this?" she demanded, in a sharp tone, as though I were somehow to blame for it.

"The girl with the big nose and the red hands," I explained carefully, recalling the most distinctive features of the girl who had employed me as her messenger.

"I *suppose*," said Nancy emphatically, "that you mean Madge Smith. And her nose isn't big, and her hands are white enough for most people."

"Yes," I said submissively, though I wondered how Nancy had identified her from my description, in that case.

"And you can tell her," continued Nancy, "that I decline to hold any communication with her whatever."

"Yes," I said again, and trotted back with the three-cornered note.

"Well?" said Madge, eagerly.

"She says she doesn't want the rotten thing," was my rather free translation of the message that had been entrusted to me.

"Horrid, mean thing," cried Madge. "She might at least read my explanation. Go and tell her it is to explain everything, and she must read it at once."

"Wouldn't it save time," I suggested once more, "if you were to go and say all that yourself? It's such a stupid thing to do, to go backwards and forwards like this all the morning, when——"

But Madge's infuriated expression sent me hastily on my fruitless errand again; and, as I expected, Nancy Waterhouse was as serenely indifferent as before.

"I require no formal explanation. Tell her that nothing can ever be the same again, and that all is henceforth over between us," she said loftily, and the three-cornered

note travelled across the room once more.

"It is too bad," declared the outraged Madge, when I had done my best to reproduce the elegant language of Nancy Waterhouse. "It is a beautiful explanation, and it took me the whole of French lesson to write. Read it yourself, and see if it isn't."

As this was what I had been longing to do all the time, I hastily unfolded the three-cornered note, and, in obedience to the request of the proud writer, I read it aloud.

"My own darling," it ran; "it was *not* my fault that I did not hear what you said at the history class. Strangles was talking so much that it was impossible to hear one's self speak. Please forgive me, and be nice once more, as you used to be. If you smile at me in the German lesson, and say, 'All right,' I shall understand. But please believe that it was *not* my fault, and that there is *nothing* to forgive. Your heart-broken, Madge."

"But," I objected, when I folded it up again, "if there is nothing to forgive, what is the use of making all this fuss about it?"

Madge Smith stared at me in dumb amazement.

"I should like to know," she said at last, "who asked for *your* opinion?"

"It wasn't meant for an opinion," I hastened to explain. "I only thought it was rather silly——"

"You only *thought*, did you?" cried Madge, with a withering scorn. "I'm sorry we're all too *silly* for you. May I ask when you are going to be moved up into the first class?"

"Come along, Madge," said the voice of an unexpected ally. "That babe isn't worth squashing." And to my astonishment, the enemy was at once subdued and led off affectionately, by Nancy Waterhouse herself.

"Well, kiddy, what are you meditating about?" asked the abrupt voice of Dorothy Pearson. I was still looking blankly after the two friends.

"I was thinking how awfully stupid it was to quarrel about nothing at all, and to say all those long words about it, and then to behave

as though nothing had happened "I returned, promptly.

"I wouldn't criticise quite so much if I were you," said Dorothy crushingly. "You'll get yourself disliked, if you do."

"What's criticising?" I asked in a puzzled tone.

"Eh, what?" said Dorothy, slightly taken aback. "Well, it's criticising, of course; saying what you think about people, don't you know."

"Then, have I got to say what I *don't* think about them?" I asked in astonishment.

"If you'll take my advice, you won't say anything at all. And you'd better remember you're the youngest kid here," said Dorothy severely; and then she went away too, and I wondered if I should ever be able to propitiate all these perfect people, who were so ready and anxious to tell me of my deficiencies.

After all, I soon found that my chief offence was the fact of my being a new girl, and as that was a defect that necessarily wore off with time, my companions gradually began to treat me with a condescension that even ripened into endurance. I felt that my last claim to their acknowledgment was established, when Dorothy Pearson admitted me to the ranks of her slaves, and allowed me to put away her books for her, and to perform sundry other offices of a servile nature, the doing of which was much coveted by her other and less favoured admirers. But the one barrier that still remained between us, and prevented me from enjoying the full confidence of my companions, was my staunchness to Miss Strangways. Of course, it was not to be supposed that I could learn all at once every detail of the school-girl's code, or else I should have known that it is never considered etiquette to profess anything more than a kindly tolerance for those in authority. But to me, it seemed quite ridiculous not to like some one, just because the making of my report happened to be in her hands, and I therefore remained faithful, in the face of much opposition, to my early friendship for her.

"It isn't as though she was like the ordinary grown up person, who talks French before you," I represented to them. "But she's as reasonable as a jolly sort of boy; and she doesn't always look, when you drop your books and things; and she only pulls you up *sometimes*, when you say 'awfully' or 'rotten.' I think she's nice."

"She's Strangles, all the same," objected Madge Smith. "You can't get over that. And if she was as nice as you make out, she wouldn't be a head-mistress at all; she'd be something jolly and kind, like a mother, or a widow, or— or—"

The lack of vocations for women, who were jolly and kind, brought Madge's eloquence to an abrupt end, and I repeated my defence of Miss Strangways, stolidly.

"I think she's nice, all the same, and I'm going to stick to her," I said.

"Wait till you have been lectured by her, that's all," replied Madge. But at the moment, I could imagine nothing more delightful than to be lectured by Miss Strangways.

The state of my spirits may best be gathered from a letter I received from Jack, when I had been at school about a fortnight.

"You are only a girl, after all," he wrote, gloomily. "It is very rotten of you to give in so easily, and I did think you'd hold out for one term at least. I knew you would only make a girl in the end, but you might have shown fight a little longer I do think. I know what it will be now, you will be always writing long letters to the other rotten girls; what they find to write about I don't know, but they always do write rot by the yard. And you'll be afraid of getting your feet wet, and all those poor things girls make such a fuss about, and you won't be any fun at all. Wilkins minor says *his* sister won't do a thing for him since she went to school, girls are never any more good, he says, when they've once been to school; it makes them so independent, he says. And Wilkins minor *knows*. There are those dormice of mine, perhaps Nurse will feed

MISS GENEVIEVE WARD.

them for me in future? Of course, she's only a woman, but even that is better than being a girl. I have left off counting the days to the holidays; if you are only going to be a cheap *girl* all the time, I might just as well stop here, though it is such a beastly hole, and we have to grind all day without stopping. Girls don't know the meaning of hard work, Boston terts says. And Boston terts says he doesn't want any more names for his ferret now that you've gone to school; he says he couldn't feel sure now that you hadn't swotted them out of a rotten history book or something. Simpson sends you his love, it's beastly poor of him, and he actually says he knows some girls who are quite nice though they *are* at a girls' school. But, of course, Simpson hasn't got any sisters. Your disappointed Jack."

I felt rather hurt when I read Jack's letter for, as I wrote to him immediately, he did not know how difficult it was to keep free from the taint of femininity, when there was nothing but girls in the house, when a bad mark was the penalty for whistling, and when one was not even allowed to make friends with the boot-boy. But, in spite of the base defection of Jack, and Wilkins minor, and Boston terts, there was a measure of comfort in the loyalty of Simpson, even although it was mainly founded on his ignorance of sisters.

And when Miss Strangways glanced over our letters on the following Sunday, to see if they were tidy, I was called upon to give a full and satisfactory explanation of the identity of one Master Thomas Simpson.

EVELYN SHARP.

MISS GENEVIEVE WARD.

To all lovers of perfect art it will be a matter of congratulation that Miss Ward has elected to emerge once more from the seclusion of her pretty villa in Regents Park. There are few indeed who can give such life to Shakespearian types as this finished *tragedienne*, and her latest creation in the superb revival of *Cymbeline* makes one almost regret that she has revived the sense of loss that will be felt on her final retirement from public life. In such characters as Queen Katherine, Lady Macbeth, and Constance, her renderings will always live as classical in the memory of students of our great poet. Yet those who



have only seen Miss Ward from the auditorium know but one side of her striking individuality. In her private life, among the most conventional surroundings, it always seems her fate to dwarf everyone about her.



MISS WARD AS QUEEN CATHERINE.

The most striking quality is power: power in the keen searching glance, power in the full low voice, power in the splendid carriage of the head. On coming face to face with this example of feminine strength, all the protective tolerance which has become man's heritage is lost: one's limitations become painfully assertive under that steady gaze. And yet this subjugation is not gained by any conscious effort: there is no aggressiveness in the quiet easy manner, no assertion in the general discussion of men and things. It is more in the sense of reserve force behind it all. Doubtless the outward mien helps this effect, for the white hair intensifies the fine eyes and strong handsome features, and the deportment gives to a figure not much above the ordinary height an air of unusual stature.

Miss Ward's long career bears out to the full these indications of indomitable courage which can "take arms against a sea of troubles, and, by opposing, end them." Her mother was a clever amateur painter, and her early impressions were gained in an atmosphere of culture and refinement. She came in touch with all the celebrities of the French capital where her parents lived, and these associations doubtless emphasised her repulsion to mediocrity. Her career opened as a vocalist, her first public appearance being at the Philharmonic Concerts in 1861. The success of *Madame Guerabella*, as she was then called, was at once assured, and it was a short step to grand opera in London, Paris, Milan, and Bucharest. No class of music came amiss to the young singer, for the compass of her voice took in three octaves! She was equally successful in oratorio, which she studied under Martha Groome; her initial experience of sacred music was in the "Messiah" at the Exeter Hall, on the first anniversary of the Prince Consort's death, when she was encored in "Rejoice greatly."

Having exhausted the triumphs of the old world, our subject next essayed the land of her birth, America, where the great misfortune of her life befel her—and yet can we call it a misfortune which gave us Genevieve

Ward? At any rate, she completely lost the use of her singing voice. Such a calamity would have broken the spirit of most artistes, but Miss Ward was twin-sister to the Phoenix—from the ashes of her lost career she soared into yet another and has ever remained among the strong of wing, near the sun. With the loss of her voice, there was apparently no course open but that of imparting to others the knowledge so hardly gained; however, giving lessons was dreary work to so spirited a temperament—if she could not succeed in opera, then she would turn to the drama. The rapid progress that she made in her new studies is shown by the fact that as early as 1873 she was already recognised as a leading interpreter of Shakespearean parts. Speaking of her South African tour, Miss Ward says, "We were told that Shakespeare would not be listened to out there; yet he proved our greatest success. We gave altogether six of his plays."

Yet such success as had already fallen to her did not satisfy the high ideal that Miss Ward placed before her: nothing but the most perfect technique would do, therefore she must go and study under Regnier, the greatest teacher of his day. To him, she frankly admits, she owes all her knowledge of the subtleties of her art.

"The broad principles of the art can be inculcated by actual illustration, and the technics of acting can be taught. But what is valuable in a master is his capacity to assist the student's insight into character, situation, significant gesture, and 'business' by practical guidance, to show the various ways in which a character may be interpreted, and to help him to find the fittest method of expression adapted to his temperament. When I went to Regnier as an artiste of some experience, I told him I did not want to be coached parrot-like in parts, for which purpose, at that time, Sarah Bernhardt, Croisette, and others used to go to him, according to the general custom in France, so that he might give them the 'traditions.'



QUEEN CATHERINE DYING.

I told him that I wanted him to teach me not as if I were going to *act*, but as if I were going to *teach*.

It is no doubt greatly due to this spirit that Miss Ward has had such a great success with many of her pupils, but more probably to her power of influencing the minds of those with whom she is associated. Moreover, she is careful to select only those who have talent and ambition, and to impress upon them the arduous nature of the profession they are adopting. In fact, her general advice to them is to adopt some other calling, unless it is a necessity of their existence. It is a pleasing sight to see her in her charming old garden, surrounded by several adoring pupils: it forms a complete instance of queen and satellites, an absolute authority born of love and admiration. And this homage is justly merited, for, since her partial retirement, Miss Ward has devoted most of her time to teaching to others her art as she learnt it from Regnier.

A chat with the great elocutionist reveals the wonderful possibilities of voice-cultivation, apart from any thought of public utterance. In Miss Ward's judgment the throat is as tractable as any other muscle of the body, and all defects in speaking can be eradicated by a proper knowledge of how to use the voice. Thus, among her pupils, there was a lady with a very marked American accent, which, after six months of study, completely disappeared; another could never pronounce her r's, until a few lessons enabled her to roll them like a Gascon. Stammering, lisping, non-aspiration, cockney twang, and other vocal blemishes, are merely tricks which can be skilfully drilled out of the unhappy possessor. As a professor of recitation, Miss Ward is quite by herself. Anyone who has heard her, as one sometimes may hear her, at an afternoon recital, will never forget the perfect art with which she curbs the intensity of force and passion that is ever apparent, and the wonderful interpretation of every line.

Above all, no one has done more to elevate

her profession and to prove that it is compatible to live above reproach even among the dangers, mythical and real, which surround the Thespian art.

L E T T E R S TO A DEBUTANTE BY A WOMAN OF THE WORLD.

III.—ON COUNTRY HOUSE VISITING.

CONSPICUOUS among doubtful pleasures, begotten of wealth and idleness, is its offspring, Country House Visiting. To learn how to kill time without suffering unutterable boredom, to make of pleasure a science, to exist without aim higher than the killing of partridges or the landing of salmon, requires a special education. The real worker finds the art of idleness too intricate and complicated an one for him to master late in life. He is seldom at his ease when there is nothing to do. He has no small talk or light badinage; lounging is distasteful to him, and from the vantage ground of his superior earnestness and solidity he finds himself in a country house actually coveting the frivolity he once despised. Assuredly an accomplished, graceful idler, is a product which nothing but heredity can evolve.

To be a welcome country-house visitor requires no little talent, an enormous amount of tact, and a large share of that virtue so despised of the moderns, amiability. To know how to be everlastingly agreeable, easily pleased, showing enjoyment in what is done with the object of promoting one's pleasure; able to add to the enjoyment of others, and content to be outshone by them, necessitates, indeed, no mean share of mental and moral endowments. There is no ordeal more fiery than the heated plough-shares over which one must walk in a country house. Just as candle-light beauty and waning charms are cruelly revealed in the searching light of curtainless windows, so shallow minds and

surface attractions are easily found out in the intimate intercourse of the country house. The pedant soon bores, the egotist becomes ridiculous, and the pretentious disgust. The spring-time of life, when spirits are highest and moods merriest, before dispositions become soured by disappointment or warped by sorrow, is of all others the most fitting for the pretty trivialities and becoming indolence of country house visiting. Added to youth, if we bring beauty and charm to the banquet, we are armed indeed.

To be beautiful by an act of volition is not possible, else would the genus ugly woman disappear from the face of the earth. To be agreeable and charming and sympathetic lies within the capacity of the average woman. More alluring and enchanting than even beauty is the subtle influence of sympathy. It has, indeed, enormous potentialities. We have all at some period of our lives come in contact with the perfection of physical endowment, which yet has left us cold and unmoved. Few have ever been swayed through the mysterious influence of sympathy without being dominated by it. The Italians, with commendable terseness, express all that we wish to convey when we describe a woman as "charming," "fascinating," "agreeable," by the simple adjective *simpatica*. Sympathetic to not one, but all, since to the weakly, pining over ill-health, the brutally robust, glorying in their strength, the intellectual, the commonplace, she is equally delightful. Such an one is never egotistical. To her is given the art of entering into her friends' interests heart and soul. No bored expression, no indifferent air, no pre-occupation is her's, whilst the woes of ill-health, bad servants, and straitened means are poured into her ear. Someone with exquisite irony has defined a "bore" as one who will persist in talking of himself and not allowing you to talk of yourself, and we all of us soften towards the being who betrays interest in the petty concerns which are so vital to ourselves. The *débutante*, therefore, who practises the virtue of unselfishness, who honestly endeavours to think first of others,

will, if she put her mind to it, become in time really interested. In proportion as she ceases to dwell on herself and finds others deserving of interest and attention, she becomes doubly attractive. The tragedies and comedies in the lives of those around her begin to dawn upon her awakening discernment. Her spiritual life quickens, and pity and love give to her features a greater beauty than that of youth. She begins to feel that she is at last an actor in the drama of life, and no longer a mere spectator. A *débutante* is more or less an embryonic creature—a crude, undeveloped mass of potentialities. In her own hands lie to a great extent her future well-being or failure: as much in the great hazy future stretching before her as in the limited sphere of a country house.

Amiability, the out-of-date virtue of which I spoke, so much lauded by the old school of romancers, and so bespattered by the later, is a gift no less valuable in a career of country-house visiting than the endowment of sympathy. As far as one can see, there is nothing essentially antithetical in the gifts of amiability and brains. Why they should occupy the accepted positions of amiability *versus* brains it is hard to say; yet there is a generally diffused belief that if you call a woman "amiable" you can call her nothing else that is interesting. The guest who is amiable, nevertheless, is the rock on which her hostess builds. Should conflicting plans be in the air, and one guest wish to bicycle, another to ride, and a third to play golf or tennis, who but the amiable one has the sorely-tried hostess to fall back upon? When the carriage appears to take the elderly lady of the party for a dull, matutinal airing, who but Miss Amiability volunteers to accompany her, and earns thereby the eternal gratitude of her hostess. No doubt our amiable young lady suffers a certain amount of boredom in the execution of the task she has set herself to do. Nevertheless, to view the matter from the lowest standpoint, self-denial, kindness, and amiability pay in the end. When next shooting season comes round, and our hostess

is preparing her list of guests, Miss Amiability is not forgotten. "We could not possibly do without that dear, sweet, unselfish girl," cries Lady A——: and before long the whole county pour libations and burn incense before her shrine. If she only continues to live up to the character she has earned, the amiable one, without possessing either great beauty or brilliant wit, has none the less infinite possibilities in her future. Accomplishments are, as a matter of course, invaluable in a country house, and since music

. . . "Can touch

Beyond all else the soul that loves it much."

the advantage of being a musician is palpable. The art of conversation is, unhappily, one so fallen into disuse, that it is almost hopeless to expect to find anyone under fifty possessing it. What passes for current coin in our realm for conversation should more aptly be described as "chatter." The average girl prattles her impressions of the hour, or discourses on the well-worn—but to her interesting—theme of the masculine entity and its idiosyncrasies. Older women find subjects for discourse in their households, dress-makers, servants, occupations, husbands' shortcomings or amusements. To call such babble "conversation" is worse than foolishness. One does not require that women should talk pedantically, or even learnedly, but sensible, intelligent conversation is not too much to expect from an educated lady. "To speak of oneself," says Mrs. Lear, "is as difficult as walking on the tight-rope. One requires such wonderful balance, and so much circumspection, not to fall in so doing." To speak of others is very nearly as difficult, since it is so hard to avoid criticising their actions, and thereby giving offence, or tumbling into the pitfalls of scandal and idle gossip. The safest rule to follow is that of talking about things, not people, and where human interest is needed, falling back upon the characters of fiction, or of history, instead of contemporaneous society. The *debutante* cannot come to great harm as far as her tongue is concerned if she observe this golden rule.

The maiden of to-day needs small encouragement to active exercises and sports. If we compare her day's programme with the dreary one followed by Lady Teazle before her marriage, we must see that the modern girl has gained enormously. Instead of being "stuck down to a spinnet" or told off to "copy receipts" in a cookery book, she cycles, plays golf, tennis, goes in for gymnastics, and is consequently a finer specimen of animal development than her predecessor, however much she may lack her graces of femininity. In country houses a knowledge of horsemanship, cycling, golf, and tennis is not to be despised: in fact, the trite saying that "knowledge is power" applies wherever one goes, and will continue to do so to the end of time.

As for the out-of-date, old-fashioned virtue of punctuality, it is held in small esteem at the end of the nineteenth century, yet none gives greater comfort to those whose hospitality we accept. Society of late years has formulated a new code of manners, and the young man or woman who keeps dinner, and his or her elders, waiting, is no longer looked upon as outraging the rules of politeness. Be this as it may, the selfishness and want of consideration for others, which permeate English society of the present day, are neither well bred nor deserving of imitation. The attitude one adopts towards others, the measure meted out to them, will be returned in kind. Hence the truest philosophy, combinedly worldly-wise and Christian as it is, consists in treating others as we would wish to be treated by them.

"L'on ne vaut dans ce monde que ce que l'on veut valoir."

At Christmas I no more desire a rose
Than wish a snow in May's new fangled
birth:

But like of each thing that in season grows.

SHAKESPEARE.



"Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
 Who is there that syngeth so,
 Nowell, Nowell, Nowell?
 I am here, Sir Christmass,
 Wel com, my lord Sir Christmass,
 Wel com to us both more and lesse.
 Com near, Nowell."

WELCOME, indeed, for there are folk galore, "both more and lesse," who find Christmas the pleasantest season of the year; and many, I hope, who like to keep in kindly remembrance, if not perpetuation, the many quaint customs and traditions of Yule. Many of them are pathetically pretty, as witness the following:

Austrian house-mothers put candles in all the windows on Christmas Eve, that the Christ-child who will presently pass by may not stumble in the darkness on the unkindly snow; and Dutch *Vrouws* rarely forget to do the same good office for Santa Claus's sake.

Throughout Northern Germany it is the Virgin Mary who passes when all are asleep, attended by a child-angel, and lamps are left lighted and tables spread with food for them, that they may not go unlighted and hungry on their way.

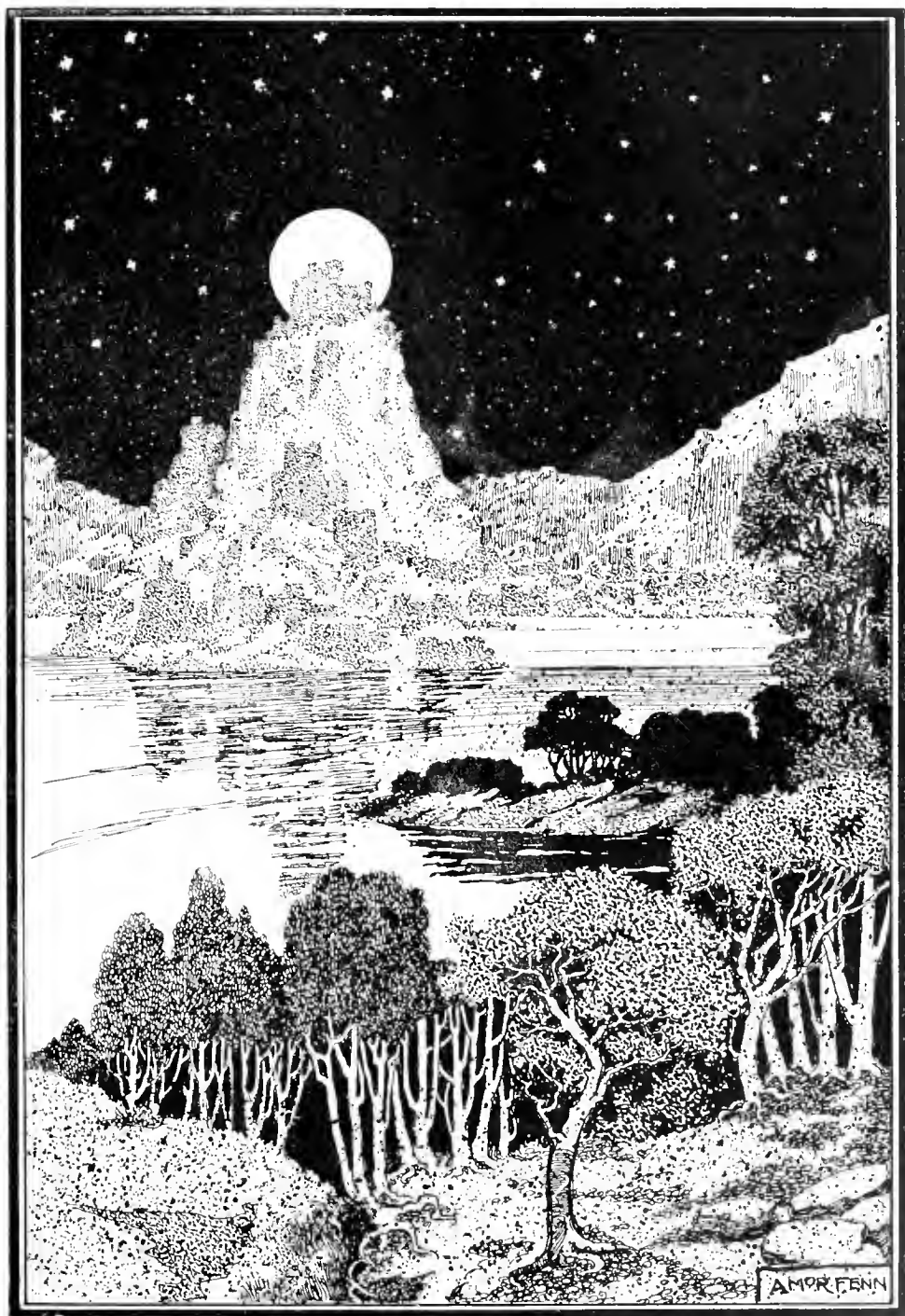
In the Tyrol and Bohemia there are no such pretty customs to observe, but the largest fruit trees are soundly beaten—*pour encourager les autres*—on Christmas Eve, while they are compensated for their flagella-

tion on Christmas Day, when the broken meats of the feast are offered to them by the owners of the orchard. In my native county of Devonshire some such custom obtains still. The apple trees are soundly shaken, and afterwards are sprinkled with hot cider, and lustily implored to bear well next year.

"Bear good apples and pears ye wull
 Barns full, bags full, sacks full, hurrah!"

On Christmas Eve the Chinese Kitchen God begins to take his hard-earned holiday, and till the second week in the New Year he idles away his time in Paradise, after having made his annual report to the Ruler of heaven on the private life of the families under his care. To soften these reports somewhat, I have heard that lazy wives smear the little god's lips with sugar on Christmas Eve, hoping thereby to bribe him to make a favourable report of their housekeeping. Christmas Eve in Ireland is a high and holy time, and bees must have a sprig of "Christmas" hung to their hives, or else they will surely desert them for the New Year; and if you have a taste for weird superstitions, you may leave the house as the clock is striking midnight, and hurrying softly across the frosty grass, you may put you ear to the nearest hive and listen to the bees inside humming a midnight mass in honour of the Christ-child's birth.

On this one night in the year the buried



THE BURIED CASTLE OF LOUGH NEAGH.

castles of Lough Neagh and the drowned City of Kilstoheen on the Boyne rise up into the moonlight, and may be seen of any traveller; and eastward, near Chapelizod, the ghost of Iseult of Ireland walks, accompanied by the ghosts of Fris tram and his hound Hodain. There is an ancient and pretty Christmas custom still observed in some parts of France, where the trail of the tripper is not and Gaze is an unknown name. Two or three days before Noel an earthen pitcher has been got ready, and completely covered with hempen bands well saturated with moisture, upon which corn and flax seeds have been sown. By Christmas Day the jar is covered in living green, and is set upon the table to add to the general pleasure by an omen of a rich harvest to come. Was it not at Noel that the old Gauls used to go out into the frosty twilight of dawn and rouse the sun with a cry of "The corn springs up, the corn springs up" and this, too, with a thought of next year's harvest? At this holy tide, too, "no fairy takes nor ghost has power to charm," and spooks and witches must keep their own unholy company until Christmas Eve and Christmas Day are over and past "so hallowed and so gracious is the time."

In Breton legend this night is chosen for the re-appearance of the drowned city of Ys, and midnight masses celebrated by bees, cattle, and even the stones of Carnac; while in Cornwall the cattle drop on their knees at the moment of midnight and intone a hymn; and King Arthur comes from his tomb at Tintagel "from spur to plume a star of tournament." Lancashire lads and lasses seek to choose them mates by setting them

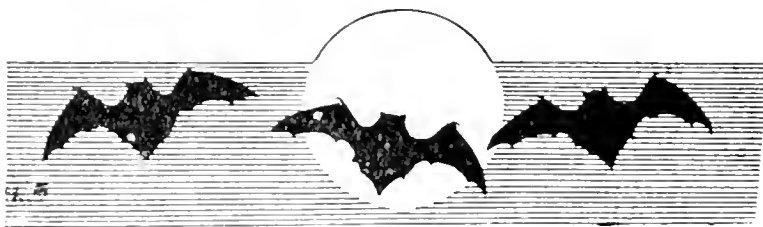
marked onions in the chimney. The first whose onion bursts is the first to marry. Carol singing, which is dying slowly out in townships, is traditional still in the countryside, and no luck will come to the lad or lass who sings less than seven carols on Christmas Day. For old sake's sake let us hope the chosen seven to be the old ancient ones—"Welcome Yule," "The first Nowell," "The Seven Virgins," "The Cherry-tree Carol," "The first Good day that Mary had," "I saw Three Ships," and that most familiar of all, "God rest you, Merry Gentlemen." Says Nicholas Breton, in his "Fantasticks": "It is now Christmas, and not a cup of wine must pass without a carol. . . . And piping and dancing puts away much melancholy." Yule-tide mummeries have gone out, too—more's the pity, for they were pleasant jests.

" To shorten winter's sadness,
See where the nymphs with gladness
Disguisedly are coming
Right merrily a-mumming."

But if carols go and mummers pass, the Christmas spirit is immortal, and the best of it I wish you, kindly readers of *ATALANTA*, with all my heart.

Dieu vous garde, tydynges if you brynge—
A Mayd hath born a chyld full yong,
The which causeth you for to syng
Nowell.
Buvez ben par toute la companie,
Make gode cheere and be rigt mery,
And syng with us now joyfullie
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell.

NORA HOPPER.





AMOR FENN

THE LITTLE PRINCESS AND THE POET.

THERE was once a Poet whom nobody wanted. Wherever he went, he was always in the way; and the reason for this was his inability to do anything useful. All the people, in all the countries through which he passed, seemed to be occupied in making something, either war, or noise, or money, or confusion; but the Poet could make nothing except love, and that, of course, was of no use at all. Even the women, who might otherwise have welcomed him, could not endure the ugliness of his features; and, indeed, it would have been difficult to find a face with less beauty in it, for he looked as if all the care and the suffering of the world had been imprinted on his countenance, and left it scarred with lines. So the poor, ugly Poet went from place to place, singing poems to which nobody listened, and offering sympathy to people, who could not even understand his language.

One day, he came to a city he had never visited before. And, as he always did, he went straight to the part where the poorer people lived; for it was all about them that he wrote the poetry to which nobody listened. But, as usual, the poor people were so full of their troubles, that they could not even understand him.

"What is the use of telling us we are unhappy?" they grumbled. "We know that already, and it does not interest us a bit. Can you not do something for us?"

But the Poet shook his head.

"If I did," he replied, "I should probably do it very badly. The world is full of people who are always doing things; the only mistake they make is in generally doing them wrong. But I am here to persuade them to do the right things, for a change, so that you may have your chance of happiness as well as they."

"Oh, we shall never be happy," the people said. "If that is all you have to say, you

had better leave us to our unhappiness, and go up to the King's palace. For the little Princess has been blind from her birth, and her great delight is to listen to poetry, so the palace is full of poets. But none of them ever come down here, so we do not know what they are like."

The Poet was overjoyed at hearing, that at last he was in a country where he was wanted; and he set off for the palace immediately.

"Who are you, and what do you want?" demanded the royal sentinels, when he presented himself at the palace gates.

"I am a Poet," he replied. "And I have come to see the Princess, because she is fond of poets."

"We have never seen a poet like you," said the sentinels, doubtfully. "All the poets in the palace have smooth, smiling faces, and fine clothes, and white hands. Her Royal Highness is not accustomed to receiving any one so untidy as yourself."

The Poet looked down at his weather-beaten clothes, and his toil-worn hands; and he stared at the reflection of his wrinkled, furrowed face, in the moat that surrounded the palace; and he sighed in a disappointed manner.

"I am a Poet," he repeated. "How can a man be a poet, if his face is smooth and his hands are white? No man can be a poet, if he has not toiled, and suffered, and wandered over the earth, for the sake of the people who are in it."

Just then, he heard a woman's voice speaking from the other side of the gates; and looking through them, he saw a beautiful, pale Princess, standing there all by herself, with a look of interest on her face.

"It is the little, blind Princess," thought the Poet, and he bowed straight to the ground, though he knew quite well that she could not see him. The sentinels saluted, too, for they were so accustomed to saluting people who never saw them at all, that the blindness of the little Princess really made very little difference to them.

"Tell me," said the Princess eagerly, "the name of the man with the wonderful voice, who is saying all those beautiful, true things?"

"Please, your Highness," said the sentinels, "he *says* he is a Poet."

"Ah," cried the little Princess joyfully, "at last you have come; I have been waiting for you all my life! At last, I have found a real Poet, and the Queen-mother will see now, that all those people in there, who say the same things over and over again, in their small thin voices, are not poets at all. Come in, Poet; why do you stay so long outside?"

So the drawbridge was let down, and the sentinels saw what a mistake they had made, and did their best to pretend that they had not meant it all; and for the first time in his life, the Poet felt that he was not in anybody's way.

"Come with me, Poet," said the little Princess, holding out her small white hand to him. "If you will take my hand, I shall feel quite sure you are there."

So the little, blind Princess and the Poet went into the palace, hand in hand.

"I have found a Poet," she announced to the whole court, just as it was sitting down to luncheon.

"What! Another?" groaned the King, from the top of the table. "I should have thought five-and-forty were quite enough, considering the demand."

"This is a *real* Poet," continued the little Princess, still holding the Poet's hand. "I knew him by his wonderful voice. I am so glad he has come; and now, we can send away all the others, who are not poets at all."

Now, this was a little awkward, for the five-and-forty poets were all present; and being mostly the younger sons of kings, who had only taken up poetry as an accomplishment, they were also suitors for the Princess' hand, which made it more awkward still. So the Queen coughed uncomfortably, and all the ladies-in-waiting blushed uncomfortably, and the five-and-forty poets naturally looked uncomfortable into the bargain. But the

little Princess, who could see nothing and never had been able to see anything, neither blushed nor felt uncomfortable.

"Will some one give place to the Poet?" she asked, with a smile.

The Queen, who was generally full of resources, felt that it was time to interfere.

"Do not listen to Her Royal Highness," she said, soothingly, to the five-and-forty poets. "She is so terribly truthful that she does not know what she is saying. I have tried in vain to break her of it."

"Don't know where she gets it from," growled the old King, who had a great dislike to scenes at meal-times.

But the five-and-forty poets recovered their composure, when they heard that the Princess was rather to be pitied than blamed; and the Queen was able to turn to the cause of the disturbance.

"Will you be kind enough to go?" she said to the Poet. "My daughter did not know who you were, because, unfortunately, she cannot see. She actually mistook you for a Poet!"

"It is the first time," said the Poet, "that any one has made the mistake. However, you are quite right, and I had better go. You will not like my poetry; I see five-and-forty gentlemen, who can write the poetry that will give you pleasure; mine is written for the people, who have to work that you may be happy. Little lady," he added, turning to the Princess, "I pray you, think no more of me. But as for me, I shall love you to the end of my days."

Then he tried to go, but the small, white fingers of the little blind Princess were round his own rough, tanned ones, and he could not move.

"I loved you before you came," she said, smiling. "I have been waiting for you all the time. Why are you in such a hurry to go, if you love me?"

The listeners grew more scandalised every moment. No one had seen such love making before. To be sure, the five-and-forty poets had written love songs innumerable, but that is not at all the same thing. Every one felt

THE LITTLE PRINCESS.

that something ought to be done, and nobody quite knew how to do it. But, fortunately, the King was hungry.

"I think you had better say the rest in private, when we have had lunch," he said grimly, and the courtiers looked immensely relieved, and a place was found next to the Princess for the Poet, and the Queen and her ladies-in-waiting proceeded to make conversation, and lunch went on as usual.

"Now," said the King with a sigh, for meals were of far greater importance to him than poetry, "you shall tell us one of your poems, so that we may know whether you are a Poet or not."

Then the Poet stood up, and told them one of his poems. It was about the people, who lived on the dark side of the city, and it was very fierce, and bitter, and passionate: and when he had finished telling it, he expected to be thrust out of the palace, and banished from the country, for that was what usually happened to him. There was a great silence when he sat down again, and the Poet did not know what to make of it. But the small, white fingers of the little Princess had again stolen round his, and that was at least consoling.

The Queen was the first to break the silence.

"Charming," she said, with an effort, "and so new."

"We have heard nothing like it before," said the ladies-in-waiting. "Are there really such people as that in the world? It might be amusing to meet them, or, at least, to study them."

The King glanced at all the other poets, and said nothing at all. And the five-and-forty kings' sons, who, if they were not poets, were at least gentlemen, rose from their seats with one accord.

"Her Royal Highness was quite right," they said. "We are not poets at all."

And they took leave of every one present, and filed out of the room, and rode away to their respective countries, where, of course, nobody ever suspected them of being poets:

and they just remained Princes of the royal blood, and nothing else, to the end of their days.

"And you, little lady?" said the Poet, anxiously.

"It was wonderful," answered the little blind Princess. "But there was no love in it."

By this time, the Queen had ceased to be impressed, and had begun to remember that she was a Queen.

"We are quite sure you are a Poet," she said, in her most queenly manner, "because you have told us something that we did not know before. But we think you are not a fit companion for Her Royal Highness, and it is therefore time for you to go."

"No, no!" cried the Princess. "You are not to go. You are my Poet, and I want you to stay here always."

Matters were becoming serious, and every one set to work to try and turn the little Princess from her purpose.

"He is shockingly untidy," whispered the ladies-in-waiting.

"And *so* ugly," murmured the Queen; "there is nothing distinguished about him at all."

"He will cost the nation something to keep," added the King, without lowering his voice at all.

But the little Princess turned a deaf ear to them all, and held out her hand again to the Poet.

"I do not believe a word they say," she cried. "You cannot be ugly, you with a voice like that! If you are ugly, then ugliness is what I have wanted all my life. Ugliness is what I love, and you are to stay here with me."

In the end, it was the Poet himself who came to the rescue.

"I cannot stay with you, little lady," he said gently. "It is true what they say; I am too ugly to be tolerated, and it has been my good fortune that you could not see me. I will go away, and put some love into my poetry, and then, perhaps, I shall find some

one who will listen to me."

But the poor little Princess burst out sobbing.

"If I could only see," she wept, "I would prove to you, that I do not think you ugly. Oh, if I could only see! I have never wanted to see before."

"Little lady," whispered the Poet, bending over her, "*I am glad that you cannot see.*"

And then, he turned and fled out of the palace, and out of the city, and away from the country that contained the little Princess, who had loved him because she was blind. And he wandered from place to place as before; but he told no one that he was a Poet, for he had felt ashamed of his poetry ever since the little Princess had said there was no love in it. And there came a day when he could keep silent no longer, so he went among the people once more, and told them one of his poems. And this time, he had no difficulty in making them understand, for he told them the story of his love for the little blind Princess.

"Why," said the people, when he had finished, "the maid is easily cured, for it is well known among our folk that a kiss on the eyelids, when asleep, from a true lover, will open the eyes of any one who has been blind from birth."

Now, when the Poet heard this, he was greatly perplexed. For, to open the eyes of his little Princess was to kill her love for him; and yet, he could not forget how she had wept for the want of her sight, and here was the power to give it back to her, and it rested with him, alone of all men in the world. So he determined to make her happy at any cost, and he turned his face towards the King's palace once more, and arrived there at midday, after travelling for seven days and seven nights without ceasing. But, of course, that was nothing to a Poet who was in love.

"Dear me," said the King irritably, when the Poet appeared before him; "I thought you had gone for good. And a pretty time we've been having of it with the Princess, in

consequence! What have you come back for?"

"I have come back to open the Princess' eyes," answered the Poet boldly.

"It strikes me," grumbled the King, "that you opened everybody's eyes pretty effectually, last time you were here. And you certainly can't see the Princess now, for she has gone to sleep in the garden."

"That is exactly what I want," cried the Poet joyfully. "Let me but kiss her eyelids while she is sleeping, and by the time she awakes, I shall have gone for ever."

"The Queen must deal with this," said the King, looking helpless in the face of such a preposterous suggestion. Her Majesty was accordingly sent for, and the Poet explained his mission all over again.

"It is certainly unusual," said the Queen doubtfully; "not to say, out of order. But still, in view of the advantage to be gained, and by considering it in the light of medical treatment—and if you promise to go away directly after, just like a physician, or—or a singing-master, perhaps something might be arranged."

And the end of it was, that the Poet was taken into the garden, and there was the little blind Princess, sound asleep in her hammock, with a maid-of-honour fanning her on each side.

"Hush," whispered the Queen. "She must not awake, on *any* account."

"No," echoed the poor, ugly Poet; "she must not awake—on *my* account."

Then he bent over her, for the second time in his life, and touched her eyelids with his lips. And the Princess went on dreaming happily, and the Poet turned and fled out of the city, once more.

"At least," he said, "she shall never know how ugly I am."

That day, every Prince who was in the palace put on his best court suit, in order to charm the Princess. But the Princess refused to be charmed. She looked at them all, with large, frightened eyes, and sent them away, one by one, as they came to offer her

THE LITTLE PRINCESS.

their congratulations.

"Why do you congratulate me on being able to see you?" she asked them. "Are you so beautiful, then?"

"Oh, *no*," they said in a chorus. "Do not imagine such a thing for a moment."

"Then why should I be glad because I can see you?" persisted the Princess; and they went away much perplexed.

"Tell me what is beautiful," said the little Princess to her mother. "All my life, I have longed to look on beauty, and now it is all so confusing, that I cannot tell one thing from another. Is there anything beautiful here?"

"To be sure there is," replied the Queen. "This room is very beautiful to begin with, and the nation is still being taxed to pay for it."

"This room?" said the Princess in astonishment. "How can anything be beautiful, that keeps out the sun and the air? Tell me something else that is beautiful?"

"The dresses of the ladies-in-waiting are very beautiful," said the Queen. "And the ladies-in-waiting themselves might be called beautiful by some, though that, of course, is a matter of opinion."

"They all look alike to me," sighed the little Princess. "Is there nothing else here that is beautiful?"

"Certainly," answered the Queen, pointing out the wealthiest and most eligible Prince in the room. "That is the handsomest man you could ever want to see."

"That?" said the Princess, disconsolately. "After all, one is best without eyes! Can you not show me some ugliness for a change? Perhaps it may be ugliness, that I want to see so badly."

"There is nothing ugly in the palace," replied the Queen. "When you get used to everything, you will be able to see how beautiful it all is."

But the Princess sighed, and came down from her golden throne, and wandered out into the garden. She walked uncertainly, for now that she was no longer blind she did not know where she was going. And there, under

the trees where she had been sleeping a few hours back, stood a man with his face buried in his hands.

"Little lady," he stammered, "I tried to keep away, but —"

Then the little Princess gave a shout of joy, and pulled away his hands, and looked into his face for a full minute, without speaking. And she put her small, white fingers into every one of his wrinkles, and she touched every one of his ugly scars, and she drew a deep breath of satisfaction.

"Just fancy," laughed the little Princess to the Poet; "they have been trying to persuade me in there, that all those Princes and people are—*beautiful*!"

EVELYN SHARP.

A MYSTERY.

With princely gifts I ply my love,
Her heart with song I seek to move,
And how by death my troth to prove,

Her mocking lips but smile,
My comely robes my form enhance,
My step is lightest in the dance,
And well-born maidens woo my glance,

And laud my courtly style;
Yet though I strive with lover's art,
Nor fame nor gold can buy her heart:

She lightly jests the while,

I wear her colours in the just,
And many a gallant bites the dust,
Yet one deals home a deadly thrust,

And, stricken low, I lie,
They raise me bleeding on a bier;
I turn to note my lady sneer,
And, lo! I see a silver tear

Steal from each pitying eye,
She bends not to the victor's bow;
Her white lips touch my sullied brow—
Methinks 'tis sweet to die.

ICARUS.

The LION and the MOUSE

Versified from *Æsop's Fables*

BY Mrs Clara Doty Bates

A LION on a sultry day,
Asleep in a shady thicket lay;
Over him rustled the slender cane,
While about him spread upon the turf,
From neck and shoulders his huge mane
Rolled and tossed like a yellow
surf.

Hide rusty, tawny,
Limbs lithe and brawny,
With paws that could creep through jungle grass
Like a cat on a carpet, yet could bound
With stride and leap along the ground;
Could over the heated desert pass,
Leaving behind a dinted wake
Of tracks like a long continuous snake;
With tail for lashing,
With teeth for gnashing,
And throat that could pour a threatening thunder—
He was indeed, and little the wonder,
Even while he drowzed within his den,
King of beasts and terror of men.

A small brown MOUSE,
From her hidden house,
Her house of grasses— little more
Than a cellar with a silken floor—
Crept out to find some tender shoot,
Some spicy bark, some juicy root,
Some berry, or nut, or kind of fruit.





She saw the **LION** there asleep;
And what should she do but crawl and creep
With tangling feet along his mane —
Perhaps she thought it a field of grain,
So wiry and yellow and grown so close;
She searched it over, she felt no fear,
But with keen bright eyes would peep and peep,
As she crept along to his very nose.

He was dreaming that over a desert slope
He chased a herd of antelope;
And his heart beat fast with a savage hope —
When the little tickling scratching claws
Made him nestle and stretch his paws.
He was slow to rouse
From his lazy drowse,
Till again and again the meddling **MOUSE**
Scrambled and whisked about his face —
A shake of his head, a fierce grimace,
And she lost her hold,
She tumbled and rolled —
The giant had moved, and there alas,
She was under his great foot on the grass!

Instead of questioning him, or speaking,
As ladies will, she fell to shrieking,
And he, with anger in his eyes,
Spoke sternly to her in this wise:
"Crawling and bothering like a fly,
You'll have to die — you'll have to die!
For 'tis never safe you ought to know:
To wake a sleeping **LION** so."

"Ah, qui, que-que,
Que-que," cried she,
"Pray let me go this once — some day,
King of the mice, I will repay!"
He laughed "Ha ha!" he laughed "Ho, ho!"
A MOUSE repay a LION! Go!"
And off to her hidden, dried grass house
Hurried the flustered, trembling MOUSE
And sank on her silk floor gratefully,
Sobbing "Que que, ai, ai, que, que!"
On stalwart haunches,
Crackling the branches,
Like straws beneath him the LION sprang
And out of his hiding
Sauntering, striding,
Roared and laughed till the jungle rang.

Down by the river, marshy, wet,
Had hunters spread a lion net;
But, full of mirth, how could he think
Of danger where he was used to drink?
One fine long leap to the reedy brink,
And plunging, falling,
The web enthralling
With cord and mesh till he could not stir;
He lay, his royal beard outspread
Like a monarch's mantle, golden-red,
On the broken rushes, a prisoner.

THE LION AND THE MOUSE.

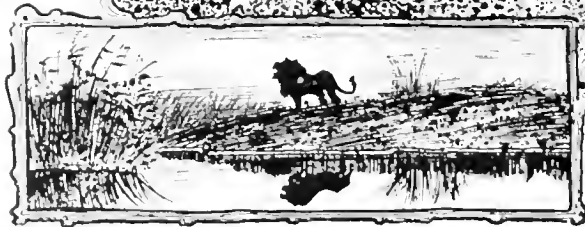
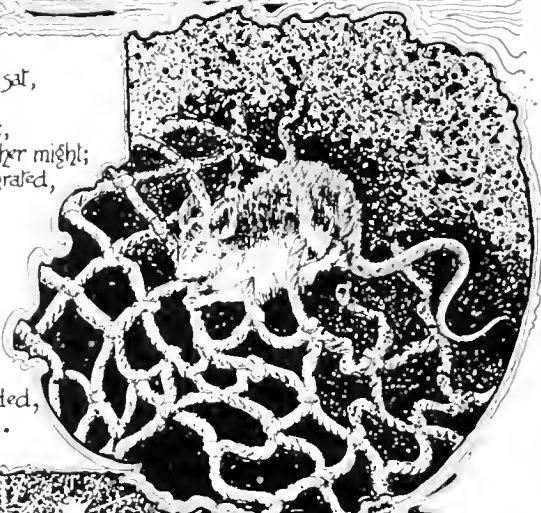


Long time with meaning
Heaving and groaning,
He strove, till dews fell chill on him,
And knew that with mornning
And hunters returning
Their dogs would rend him limb from limb.

Hark, hark!
A rustle and stir down in the dark!
A piping voice, a gentle squeaking,
Not so loud as a cricket creaking,
"Lie still, O king of the mice, lie still!
If I can set you free, I will!"

'Twas the little MOUSE, and down she sat,
Nibble at this rope, gnaw at that;
Teeth were tiny, but sharp to bite,
And she filed and sawed with all her might;
Tugged and pulled, and rasped and grated,
Cut and scissored and separated!

So hour by hour passed away,
Till rosy hints on the twilight gray
Told of the coming on of day.
And then, at length,
By the puny strength
The LION had laughed at and derided,
His treacherous fetters were divided.



A SUPREME TEST.

By AGNES GIBERNE.

Author of "*Miss Dacreux, Spinster*,"
"*The Girl at the Dowry House*," etc.

CHAPTER I.

GIVEN IN CHARGE.

"BREN! I say, Bren! You're a dependable sort of girl, I believe. Eh?"

"I hope so, uncle Phil." Brenda stood upon the first landing, opposite an elderly gentleman, upon whose scanty hair and short grey beard the light fell full from a lamp overhead. He was stroking the said beard, with a contemplative air; and the face above, while good as to the forehead, carried some tokens of weakness in mouth and chin. The prevailing expression, however, was of kindness. Brenda, who at his call had run from her bedroom, was under twenty in age, and pretty, though the prettiness would not suffer too critical an inspection. The blue eyes were charming, and the features, while of no particular type, were set off by perfect colouring; but she was below middle height, with a figure square in build. She had just donned for dinner an old black dress, half-low, with elbow-sleeves.

"I'm sure I hope so," she repeated. "Why uncle, don't you think you can trust me?"

"And if you make a promise, you know how to keep it? Eh?"

"Of course I do. Of all droll things to ask!—when I have been under your roof for five years."

"So long as that, is it? Really, how time flies! Well, well, you are a good girl in the main, my dear, and I have no particular fault to find. Except of course that you are a young woman—ahem!—and that young women in general are not—well, not absolutely and altogether reliable, you know."

"Young men always are, I suppose," retorted Brenda, with a sparkle.

"If a man makes a promise, he understands that it has to be kept, or else that he has to endure the odium of breaking it. But when a

woman makes a promise—nine times in ten she merely means to keep it if the keeping suits her convenience. And if she fails to do so, the last thing she expects is to be blamed."

"I'm not that sort of girl. Now, uncle, am I? Just think. Have you ever known me behave in such a way?"

Mr. Bracy stroked his beard again, laughing slightly. "Perhaps not. I do not know that you have ever been put to the test."

"Put me to the test now. Do—I should like it. You shall see how dependable I am." She held up her head and her eyes shone.

"It is quite a simple matter. Just a bit of business that I want done; only I want it done properly; not scamped, you understand. Eh?"

"Of course you do, and of course I'll do it." Brenda was an obliging girl, and she liked to please; moreover, he had put her upon her mettle. "Is it something to-morrow, in London? On my way to the Warringtons'?"

"Precisely that. You will have to cross part of London."

"Yes. Nellie Twiston means to meet me; but if she doesn't I can manage, all right."

"Come here, and I will show you what I want."

Mr. Bracy descended the flight with deliberation, and Brenda, waiting till he reached the bottom, skimmed lightly after. He led the way into his study, shut the door, and pointed to a japanned tin box, strongly made, and padlocked.

"I wish you to take charge of that. It holds papers of great importance. It has to go to town; to be left with my lawyer."

"With Mr. Casey. Has it to do with the law-suit?" Brenda knew that a law-suit had been dragging its slow length along; and though not quite clear as to the object of the suit, which indeed she had never troubled herself to master, she knew that her uncle's successive moods were much affected by its progress. She had an idea that it was soon to come to an end, and that its results would in some way tell seriously on his future,

while hardly realising that they would tell also upon her own.

"It has to do with the law-suit," repeated Mr. Bracy, solemnly. "And that box must be with Mr. Casey to-morrow: if possible by noon; at all events, not later than six o'clock. I intended to take it up myself next week, but Mr. Casey has suddenly found that he cannot wait so long."

"But why does it matter so much?"

"My dear, the papers have to do with the law-suit. That is about as much as you can grasp." Mr. Bracy spoke with a benevolent smile. He had no lofty idea of the feminine intellect, though most kind from his superior standpoint to all women who came in his path. "Now, what you have to undertake to do is on no account to let that box go out of your sight, until you place it in Mr. Casey's hands. That is the whole, and it is perfectly simple. Don't put it with the luggage, or under the seat, but keep it strictly in sight; and at the office insist on seeing Mr. Casey himself. I shall write to him to expect you."

"It is a heavy little box," laughed Brenda, pulling at one handle. "It might almost be full of gold."

"Papers sometimes represent as much value as gold. Can I depend upon you, Bren?"

She put out her lips at him merrily. "Of course you may. I'll do exactly what you wish. But why don't you come, too, if you are anxious?"

"Because I have two engagements to-morrow that I can't put aside, and another next day; and Casey wants the papers at once. You will drive, of course, straight from one station to the other, and Casey's office is hardly more than five minutes out of your route—within a few minutes of Liverpool Street. Here is the address, and I will put it on the box too. You must take it there the first thing. I don't know who else to send. Williams has no more brains or memory than an oyster. As likely as not, he would drop the box on his way to the station, or leave it behind him in the train.

I would rather depend upon you, Bren."

"All right, uncle. I promise faithfully. On my word and honour! Will that do?" she asked gaily. "You needn't be afraid. I *promise* to do it all, just as you wish."

Brenda St. John had been left as a penniless orphan nearly five years earlier. From that time she had found a home, and a happy one, with her childless uncle and aunt. Life in their quiet village, even though a town lay near, included few excitements and practically no dissipations; but Brenda was a girl of contented disposition, ready to make the best of things, and able to enjoy whatever came in her way. She was very fond of her uncle and aunt, and had grown to be as an adopted daughter in the house.

Lately, a new source of interest and expectation had arisen. An old school-friend of hers, by name Nellie Debenham, had married Brenda's cousin, Henry Twiston; and twice during the past year a brother of this friend, Frederick Debenham, had been to stay within a mile or two of Brenda's home. He and she had met often, and they had found a great deal to say to each other. Brenda liked Debenham, and Debenham had seemed to like Brenda. That was, perhaps, as much as could safely be said. He was a young man of good looks, good position, and good principles; and Brenda's friends were disposed to hope that something might come of it all. Nothing decisive had as yet taken place; but Brenda thought of him often, and at sight of him her heart would throb more quickly than she would have cared to confess. The question which nobody could venture to answer at present was—did he also think often of her? If not, then the less she saw of him the better for her own happiness.

Mrs. Twiston had promised to meet Brenda in town, and, perhaps, if engagements permitted, to pilot her across to the Liverpool Street Station. Less than an hour's journey beyond would land her among her friends, the Warringtons. Brenda was delighted at the

thought of seeing Mrs. Twiston, and secretly still more so at the prospect of hearing some mention of Mrs. Twiston's brother. The Warringtons, with whom she was going to spend a fortnight or more, were acquainted with the Twistons; so it was not impossible that she might, while there, meet Fred Debenham himself. Lee Manor lay within an easy distance of town by rail.

"Now, mind!" Mr. Bracy urged in impressive tones, when seeing Brenda off—"mind, my dear, you have to keep this under your own eyes. You understand? Strictly under your own eyes. Don't give it over into other people's charge. Just take care that you have it always in sight, until you get to Casey's. Eh? I may depend upon you? Eh?"

"Yes, to be sure, uncle." She was growing tired of the reiteration. "I'll be awfully particular. There is plenty of time for everything, and I have promised."

"Don't trust porters, or anybody. Don't let it out of your sight. Girls are so forgetful—if I had any other way of sending it—But, after all, you are a sensible child. Mind! I wouldn't lose those papers for——"

The sentence was cut short, as the moving train bore Brenda out of hearing. She felt relieved to escape, being sure that the fashionable young lady opposite was laughing at them both. Also, she had noted the eyes of a man at the farther end of the compartment, peering over his copy of *Tit-Bits* with apparent interest. He had rather staring eyes, and Brenda, thinking him unpleasant, resolved that if the young lady should get out before the train reached London she would change to another carriage. As it happened, the second lady kept her seat, and the man withdrew his eyes; so Brenda forgot him.

She had plenty to read and to think about during her two hours' journey; and when the London terminus was reached, her cheeks flushed brightly. For, as they glided in, she saw, not only Mrs. Twiston, but also Mrs. Twiston's brother. Frederick Debenham himself stood on the platform, a smile of welcome lighting up his face.

"So here you are, and in good time, too," Mrs. Twiston remarked, as Debenham threw open the door. "How do you do? Fred is staying with me, and we have come together. Quite well? That's right. How much luggage? One trunk—and one Gladstone bag? Give over your small things to this porter. He will bring them all. What is the matter?"

"I'll carry this myself. Uncle said I must keep it under my own charge. I can lift it—really!"



"GIRLS ARE SO FORGETFUL."

"Rubbish, my dear! Of course you will keep it under your own charge; but that needn't mean breaking your back." In softer tones Mrs. Twiston added, "If you particularly wish to have your goods stolen, that is the way to bring it about—by showing special anxiety as to any one package. Just seem indifferent, and all will go right. Fred, please see to Brenda's luggage. We will wait for you here."

Brenda submitted uneasily, because she

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did not know how to resist without making herself comical in Mrs. Twiston's eyes—and, doubtless, also in her brother's, which she minded far more. The latter vanished, with porter and lesser goods, and Brenda peered solicitously after them.

"It's all right. Do attend to me, Bren. I have something to say. Which train have you thought of going out by?"

"It doesn't go for nearly an hour and a half. I meant to get something to eat in Liverpool Street. So few trains stop at that little country station."

"Well, we don't mean you to go on by the first train. Isn't there one starting somewhere about five or six o'clock? You must send the Warringtons a telegram. Fred and I want to take you to the Exhibition. Now, you are not to protest, because I know you will like it." Then, lowering her tone—"Don't you see? Fred will be with us! Ah!"—significantly, in response to a blush. "I don't mind telling you, privately, that Fred is rather taken with *somebody*. He actually said to me that he wanted to see that somebody again. So this isn't an opportunity to be thrown away. I arranged the whole plan for his benefit and yours. Next week he goes abroad for two months. Mind, you are not supposed to know all I have said."

"But, Nellie, I promised uncle Phil so faithfully that I would not lose sight of that box, or give it up to anybody except to his lawyer. It has to do with the lawsuit."

"That wretched affair not ended yet! But you are not going to give the box up, or lose sight of it—in a sense. You will know all the time where it is. Don't be a goose, my dear."

"Couldn't we drive first to Mr. Casey's, and let him have it? And then I should feel quite happy."

"Mr. Casey's? Where is his office? Just the opposite way from the Exhibition. I don't mean to be dragged off there; I couldn't think of such a thing. Either you leave your packages here, safe in the cloak-room and come with us; or else we put you into a cab for Liverpool Street and go off by ourselves.

But you are not so idiotic, Bren. You know too well what you would lose. Now, be sensible. And mind you don't say a word of all this to Fred. 'Why not?' Because—why, of course he would think it was a mere excuse. He would suppose you didn't want to come with us. Don't you see? Besides, he would feel bound as a gentleman to go any distance out of his way to please a lady. And after you were out of hearing, he would say what an awful bore it had been. That's the way with men, you know. Much better not risk being a bore. There, they have fished out your luggage; and here comes the precious box too. Have you made up your mind? I'm not going to have the worry of a discussion. It must be 'yes' or 'no,' sharp."

Brenda felt herself to be torn in two. She tried to think that a refusal was impossible. It would be so ungrateful to her kind friends. And Fred Debenham was going abroad. She would not see him again before he went. Who could say what the loss of this day might mean to her future? Besides, people did constantly leave packages, even valuable packages, in the cloak-room for hours together; and who ever heard of such packages being lost? The plan was perfectly safe. No harm *could* result. Poor dear uncle Phil really was very faddy and fidgetty, as everybody knew, though, of course, the kindest of men, and one to whom she owed much. But like most young folks, Brenda was not overburdened with a sense of her indebtedness. She only wished to keep her promise, and to please Mr. Braey, while not forfeiting the great delight which had suddenly opened before her vision.

When giving her promise, she had fully meant to carry it out to the letter; but she had not dreamt of any such test as this. If anyone in the world except Fred Debenham had been in question, she could cheerfully have given up a dozen Exhibitions. But to lose the chance of hours spent in Debenham's company; to lose it for absolutely nothing, except a ridiculous promise, drawn from

her by an elderly man's nervous fancies—it was more than was to be expected! Brenda pictured herself driving off alone in the cab, with the heavy box of papers opposite; and then she had a quick vision of hours following, through which she would always be thinking of what she had lost, regretting that she had not decided differently, longing to have the opportunity over again, perhaps shedding bitter tears at the thought that it might never recur. And if Debenham were to take it as a mere excuse—if he were to think that Brenda had declined the Exhibition because she did not care to be thrown with him—

"Well?" Mrs. Twiston said, as these ideas flashed through Brenda's mind.

"I shouldn't think it can matter. I've never been to one of these Exhibitions yet. If uncle were here, he could not mind. You are sure the box will be safe?" Brenda spoke nervously.

"As safe as if it were in your lawyer's hands.

That's right. I thought you had too much sense to refuse. Just in time," softly, as Debenham drew near. "Well, Fred, it is all right. Brenda is charmed to go. Better bring the things at once."

Brenda felt alike blissful and miserable, but she offered no further objections. A telegram having been despatched to her friends, they reached the cloak-room, and the man asked— "How many packages?"

"Five," Brenda answered. "And the name is St. John. I shall come back for them about five o'clock." She gazed at the official with anxious eyes. "Please take

great care of that tin box. It——"

A nudge from Mrs. Twiston checked her. "You little goose! The less said, the safer," was whispered in her ear. "Come along."

A crowd had gathered, other people awaiting their turn. Brenda felt herself hustled roughly back from Mrs. Twiston's side; and when she looked indignantly round, to see whence the push had proceeded, she caught sight of a face close to her shoulder, not altogether unfamiliar. It was that of the man with a disagreeable stare, who had travelled up in her compartment. He muttered a hasty apology, but seemed chiefly intent on getting out of the crush, and Brenda

hurried to join Mrs. Twiston.

"Why didn't you keep with me, Bren?"

"I couldn't. A horrid man squeezed against me, and kept me back; so rude of him."

"Never mind. Fred has gone on to the underground to take our tickets. Make haste; we don't want just to miss a train, and to have ten minutes'

waiting. To-day is my affair, remember; so you are not to think about money-concerns till you get back here. Be sure you don't look dismal, or Fred will think you dislike the plan."

Brenda gathered together her doubts and hesitations, and endeavoured to pack them out of sight in a back corner of her mind. She knew that they would force themselves upon her notice later, and would give her no peace until she should have told her uncle all that had happened. But when once the box was safe with Mr. Casey, that would be a comparatively easy matter. Meanwhile, it



"A CROWD HAD GATHERED."

A SUPREME TEST.

was all right at the station. No mental worry could add to its security ; and she had to enjoy herself. It would be foolish to let such a day be spoilt by regrets and fretting. Even if she had not acted quite rightly, she was in for it now. She could not give up and go back.

Could she not

For one moment Brenda wavered, and almost turned round. She would have saved herself a great deal of misery by so doing.

"No, no, no; quite impossible," she asserted the next instant, while hurrying with Mrs. Twiston to the District Railway. It would look so absurd. Fred Debenham would laugh at her. He would think she wanted to seize upon any pretext for getting away. She could not risk that. It was out of the question.

So, with a determined effort, she cast aside the doubts which still clung about her, and resolved to make the best of the next few hours. And she succeeded. Her spirits rose ; the vision of Mr. Bracy's box faded out of sight ; and she became engrossed with present delights.

Debenham exerted himself to be extremely agreeable ; and Mrs. Twiston, while always sufficiently at hand, took care not to be invariably within ear-shot. Nothing actually came of these little devices, for Debenham was not a man to act in a hurry ; but something was very much nearer to "coming" in the afternoon than it had been in the morning. Debenham had not hitherto been entirely sure of his own feelings. He had thought Brenda an exceedingly nice girl ; he had admired her eyes and complexion ; he had never seen her without wishing to see her again ; but he had not positively made up his mind to seek her for his wife. This day might be expected to mean a good deal in his present state, inclining him the one way or the other.

As hours went by Mrs. Twiston felt satisfied that the day had meant a good deal. She had never seen her brother more engrossed with any girl ; and she had never seen Brenda more thoroughly at her best.

"It is quite a success," she told herself complacently, when at length obliged to say aloud "We really must be off now. You two seem to have lost the consciousness of time. There is the luggage to get out, you know, and the drive round by that tiresome lawyer's. Fred, I am going to ask you, when we leave the underground, to let me go straight home, and I'll leave you to see Brenda off in a cab, with her luggage. Will that do, Bren ? I would come, too, but I am expecting a friend, and I shall be late, as it is. I think you can manage for yourself in Liverpool Street, if Fred helps you through preliminary arrangements." To herself Mrs. Twiston added, "If he likes to go on to Liverpool Street, of course he can. Any other man would, in his place ; but one never can be sure with Fred."

Brenda protested eagerly. "I couldn't think of troubling Mr. Debenham, and I can manage quite well. I can really. I am a very good traveller." But these suggestions were not so much as listened to.

CHAPTER III.

MISLAIN OR LOST.

"Now, if you will give me your ticket, I will see to getting out your packages," Debenham said, when the two had seen Mrs. Twiston off and had come on together from the underground. Brenda was in a state of secret exaltation. She felt, as did Mrs. Twiston, that the day had been one of complete success. For the first time a clear consciousness existed in her girlish heart, not only that she loved Debenham, but that Debenham no less surely loved her.

"My ticket !" Brenda lifted happy blue eyes to his, and a vague expression crept into them. "Oh, of course, the luggage-ticket ! Yes, I put it into my purse." She drew out the little seal-skin thing, and glanced through the pockets with a puzzled air. "I thought

it was here. How odd! Where can I have put it?"

Debenham stood waiting, as she searched her purse, turned out her pocket, and felt inside the front of her dress. Her eyes went again to his face, with a blank appeal.

"Don't get flurried," he said, in his kindest voice. "Think quietly for a moment. You must have the paper somewhere, you know."

"I can't imagine where."

"Have you no other pocket? No second purse or bag?"

"Only this one pocket, and no other purse. My hand-bag is with the rest of the luggage."

Again she hunted, oppressed by an ever-growing anxiety, as the recollection of Mr. Bracy's injunctions and of her own ill-kept promise came upon her. For hours she had not once thought of the tin box or of the lawyer. She felt within her pocket anew, shook out her handkerchief, passed a finger inside her waistbelt, and gazed at Debenham in dismay.

"Don't be alarmed. I dare say you will find it yet. If not, we must manage. But try and remember. What did you do with the ticket at first?"

"I put it into my purse. At least"—frowning with the effort to recall what had passed—"at least I had my purse in my hand. I had just paid tenpence for the five packages, and the man had given me the ticket. I was going to put it into this little pocket under the flap."

"You cannot be sure that you actually did so?"

"N—o," dubiously. "There was such a crowd, and I was pushed back. A rude man ran against me, and that made me angry; and somehow I never thought any more about the paper. I may have dropped it then, and just put my purse into my pocket."

"You did not notice the number on the ticket?"

"I hardly looked at it. There were four or five figures."

"Well, we must explain to the man. I do not suppose he will make much difficulty.

Happily, he knows me well, as I often leave parcels here."

They found the office quiet, and the head official free to bestow his attention. Debenham explained what had occurred, and Brenda was called upon to describe what had been left in charge. She made her statement clearly, though in faltering tones. "There are five things; a good-sized trunk, with two straps; a Gladstone bag; a hold-all; a hand-bag; and a tin box. My name, 'Miss St. John,' is on all of them, except the hand-bag and the tin box—and that has 'Bracy' on the top in large letters, and an address on a card to 'Mr. Casey.' I saw them all put together in the further corner, over there; but they must have been moved. I don't see them now."

The man consulted in a low voice with his assistant.

"They have been already claimed," he said at length.

"By whom?" asked Debenham. Brenda failed to grasp at once the situation.

"A porter brought the ticket—for someone who gave the name 'St. John.' It was a busy time; between two and three o'clock."

"The lady tells me she said she should not be back until five o'clock."

"Yes sir. We could hardly be expected to think of that," the man observed, civilly. "People often change their minds. You see, if once the ticket is lost, there is no check. Anybody who finds it may present it and claim the packages; anybody at least who can give the right name. The thief may have seen that upon the boxes. When the ticket is shown we do not ask many questions, and there was nothing to lead us to suspect that all was not right."

Brenda glanced from one to another with bewildered eyes. "I don't understand. What does it mean?" she asked.

"I am afraid you must have dropped your ticket about here, in the crowd, and somebody who had noticed your name on the luggage must have picked it up and made use of it." Brenda seemed dazed, and he

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spoke slowly to give her time. "The police may recover the things for you; but meantime it is most trying and unfortunate. I am very sorry that it should have happened."

As the full extent of the disaster dawned upon Brenda, she grew whiter and whiter. All her own clothes were gone; her dresses; her trinkets; several valuable ornaments, which had belonged to her mother, including a pearl necklace and a bracelet of rubies; but the loss of personal possessions was as nothing compared with the disappearance of her uncle's box. She stood like a monument of silent despair, not knowing what to think or what to say.

Debenham turned to enquire as to the person who had claimed the luggage; and the reply proved unsatisfactory. The official could say little. If confronted with the thief, he might possibly recognise him; but among the scores constantly passing before his eyes he would remember few faces with clearness. Some sharper had probably noted the luggage and picked up the ticket. He might even have hustled the young lady on purpose, to put her off her guard, and then have twitched the paper from her hand. People could not be too careful in London. The official evidently commiserated Brenda for her misfortune, and was willing to do aught in his power; but he could not do much. Brenda, listening to all this, recalled her impulse to turn back on her way with Mrs. Twiston to the District Railway. Had she yielded to that impulse, she would have been in time to save her property.

Debenham drew her aside from the crowd, which was gathering again round the office, led her to a quieter spot, and placed her on a bench, occupied by no one else. No tears came, but she was pale as ashes, and her hands were twisted nervously together. To Debenham it seemed that, great though the loss might be, her misery was disproportioned to the cause. "What shall I do?" she murmured, half unconsciously. "What shall I do? If I had only gone straight on! If I had only kept my word! What *will* uncle say?

O how could I do it?"

"Will your uncle be so much annoyed?" asked Debenham, catching a few of the words. "At the loss of your clothes?"

"No, no, not that! If it were only that! O no, it is much worse. It is the box for the lawyer!"

Regardless of wondering glances cast by passers-by, she poured out her pitiful little tale. Debenham at first remained standing, but he could not hear the smothered utterances, and he had to take a seat by her side. She made no attempt at self-excuse, and did not try to explain away her own faulty action. It never so much as occurred to her to hide from Debenham the true cause for her distress. She told him how "faithfully" she had promised on no account to lose sight of the box; and how she had fully meant to keep her word; and how the idea of the Exhibition had been too tempting and delightful; and how Mrs. Twiston had assured her that the plan was perfectly safe, and that the box was sure to be all right—but she did not seek to shelve off the blame from her own shoulders to those of Mrs. Twiston. The only thing she failed to explain was *why* the temptation had been so overpowering. Debenham might have been able from his own observation to supply this omission, but this did not affect his judgment of the case. He listened with drawn brows to the story, which was broken at almost stated intervals by a dry sob.

"But why did you not let me know your difficulty? We could have driven round by Casey's. Anything rather than——" and he stopped. "Half-an-hour's delay in going to the Exhibition would have been nothing."

"O if only I had!"

"It cannot be helped now." He spoke kindly, but with a cold intonation. "The question next is—what do you propose to do?"

She looked towards him helplessly. "I don't know. If you would only tell me!"

"I think there is no doubt whatever that your duty is to go straight home, and to con-

fess to your uncle what has occurred." He saw a shrinking movement. "You will find it difficult, no doubt, but no other course would be right. Mr. Bracy should be informed immediately. You can hardly go to your friends with no luggage; and it may be many days, at best, before you recover the boxes."

"If I ever do!" faintly.

"I hope sincerely that you may, but it must take time. You can telegraph to the Warringtons not to expect you—or, rather, I will see to that. I will call at Casey's also, for you, and put the matter at once into the hands of the police. If the box contains only papers, of no value except to Mr. Bracy, an offered reward may bring them back. Mr. Bracy will no doubt wish to take steps in that direction; and I will consult with Mr. Casey, so that no time may be lost. But you must tell me what to say to the lawyer."

"Tell him all—everything—whatever you think right," she whispered. "I—I—deserve it! It has to be known. And—I can't thank you enough."

CHAPTER IV.

CONSEQUENCES.

DEBENHAM was hardening his heart against those tremulous and sorrowful utterances. He had always prided himself upon the inviolability of his own word; and he had always declared that when—if ever—he should marry a wife, that wife must, beyond all things, be a woman with a word of like inviolability. "When my wife says a thing, she shall mean it, and when she makes a

promise, she shall keep it," he had often remarked. The rhythm of the sentence was pleasing, and it gratified his quasi-poetical sense.

Clearly, Brenda St. John, who could "promise faithfully" and "on her word and honour" to follow a certain course of action, and at the first breath of temptation could fling her promise to the winds, was no fit wife for Fred Debenham. Two hours earlier he had deliberately made up his mind that she *was* the girl for him, and that he would speedily put the necessary question. That resolve was now shaken to its base; and his mouth had taken a hard set.



"HER PITIFUL LITTLE TALE."

"I could not do less—for any lady in distress," he made answer chillingly to her murmur of gratitude, and Brenda understood. She knew that he was alike sincerely sorry for her, and direfully disappointed in her. He would do his best to recover her lost property; but he would not ask her to marry him. A black cloud had crept over her sky,

all sunshine one short hour before.

"If you are willing to do as I advise, I will ask about trains," he added, and she moved her lips in assent. He went away, and was speedily again by her side. "A train will start in ten minutes, and I have brought your ticket. Just time for me to see you off comfortably."

Brenda wondered whether she would ever feel comfortable again. The word sounded like mockery in her present condition. She took the ticket, forgetting that he had paid for it out of his purse, and moved silently by his side. He put her into an empty com-

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partment, and stood then, waiting uneasily, looking anywhere rather than towards her face.

"Please do not waste any more time over me," she entreated, with the calmness of desperation. "I am all right now, and the train will start directly."

Debenham did not move.

"I know who did it," she went on monotonously. "The man who travelled up with me. Uncle was talking about the box, and I saw him listening. And in the crowd, when I was pushed, I found him close to my side. But if he has stolen the things, he will take care not to be found out."

"Don't be too despondent," Debenham said, as the whistle sounded. He had, of course, to look at her, when he spoke to her; and she lifted to his a pair of blue eyes, like speedwell blossoms over-flowing with dew. Tears had come in a sudden rush, not to be controlled, just when she counted herself most composed. Debenham was a good deal disturbed. "Don't—pray," he begged, hurrying along by the moving train. "I promise to do all that I can, until your uncle can take the matter up. You may depend upon me. Good-bye."

Then the two were parted, and Brenda hid her face, thankful to have a compartment to herself. "It is over!—all over!" she gasped aloud. "I shall never see him again. And, oh, things might have been so different." Even the dread of seeing Mr. Bracy could not overshadow this sharp pain.

The next two hours seemed interminable; and at their close she crept out upon the familiar platform, feeling twenty years older than in the morning, a forlorn, luggage-less traveller. No cab could be had without a previous order, and she was ashamed to appeal to the station-master for help, but shrank away as fast as possible into the dark lanes, where usually she would have feared to be alone. When at length she reached home, and presented herself in the study, Mr. Bracy stared in amazement at the woe-begone little figure.

"Bren! Why, Bren!" he exclaimed.

Brenda dropped on her kness beside him, burying her face in his coat-sleeve; and once more the tale trickled slowly forth in broken accents. Below other sources of distress lay one pressing question. Would he, when he knew all, thrust her from him in anger? Would he say that he had had enough of her, and desire her to find some other home?

But as the sad little story went on, he held her closer and yet closer. One heavy sigh might be heard; yet, simultaneously with the sigh his other arm came round her.

"I don't think you'll do that sort of thing again, Bren. My poor little girl! You have had a sharp lesson. And it isn't ended either—not by any means ended!"

"O uncle, I'll never, never, never break my word again."

He soothed her kindly, and by-and-by she was able to look up. That glance brought her severest punishment. Mr. Bracy's face had grown suddenly into the face of a very old man, lined and hollowed.

"Is it so bad?" she breathed.

"My dear, if the box cannot be recovered, it means—probably—ruin to us all!"

What Brenda endured during the next two months she seldom afterwards cared to enlarge upon. Hours were as days, and days were as weeks. Every effort was made to recover the vanished luggage, and it seemed long a hopeless matter. Without those papers the lawsuit would inevitably turn against Mr. Bracy; and other losses also were involved. If the box failed to re-appear, he would be a poverty-stricken man for the rest of his days; he and his wife would have to seek a new and comfortless little home; and for Brenda no resource would remain but teaching.

Even recollections of Debenham grew faint beside this threatening calamity. For Brenda owed to Mr. and Mrs. Bracy all happiness in life during five years past; and the dread that she should have cast a shadow

upon their old age was terrible; not the less so, because neither of them spoke to her a word of reproach.

At the end of two months, suddenly, the tin box turned up, and the papers were restored intact. The man who brought back the box professed to have purchased it from another, whose whereabouts was not to be discovered; and he also professed to know nothing of the remainder of the luggage. He came in response to the advertisement, claiming the reward which had been offered from time to time. If he were in collusion with the thief, he managed cleverly to hide the fact. Brenda saw no more of her own possessions, or of the man who had travelled up to town with her. The loss of her mother's jewels was a serious trouble; but the lawsuit being gained by Mr. Bracy, she had escaped one great unhappiness.

Months passed, and Debenham did not again come to the neighbourhood. Mrs. Twiston wrote to Brenda, not long after the day at the Exhibition, expressing sympathy, and also calling her friend "a little goose," with much frankness. "Doubly a goose, my dear," she said. "First, in losing your ticket; and secondly, in letting out to Fred about that ridiculous promise. Don't you know what a fastidious fellow he is? Why didn't you keep your own counsel? I would not have betrayed you." Brenda was not so sure on that point; and despite all that was involved she did not regret her own outspokenness. Sooner or later some whisper of the affair would certainly have reached Debenham—"and where should I have been then?" she thought. Her very knowledge of what Mrs. Twiston called his "fastidiousness," to which Brenda herself gave a different name, made her the more glad that she had hidden nothing from him. "But I think he might believe how sorry I am, and know that I could never do such a thing again," she sometimes said, with a patient little sigh.

She tried in vain to forget him. It was plain that he meant to keep out of her way.

She had to live through these long months, enduring the trouble she had brought upon herself, which was none the easier to endure, because she had chiefly herself to blame. But Brenda did endure bravely. No one was allowed to see how much she suffered. Sometimes it seemed to her that the harder she strove to put him out of her mind, the more persistently she remembered him; yet no one could have divined this from her face.

Though she did not know it, Debenham was in a like condition. He could not forget Brenda. Do what he might, he was unable to banish her from his thoughts. He continued to be very determined in his own view of the matter, and was quite resolute in regarding her as no suitable wife for himself, the immaculately truthful Fred. He was too severe in his youthful positiveness to take Mr. Bracy's wider and more generous view of the girl's real sorrow for her failure. All the same, Debenham cared for Brenda a great deal more than he wished to care. She haunted him far more often than he would have liked to avow.

A good part of a year had gone by, and Debenham had not once seen Brenda. He had done his best to blot her out of his life. He had even tried to like another girl, but without success. Then he had retreated in dudgeon, setting before his mind a cheerful picture of perpetual bachelorhood, which somehow failed to look charming. Work, no doubt, was the correct remedy, and he worked vigorously, with a partial measure of success. During several weeks he really did dwell less upon the past.

Till one day—when he happened to be out of sorts, and instead of going to work, spent some hours, half-asleep, upon a sofa. This was an unusual event in his life. Lying thus, unoccupied, he thought of nothing but Brenda, and for once he gave full swing to memory. Then he dropped into a brief forgetfulness, and on waking up he heard distinctly Brenda's voice:

"O if only I had! . . . Tell him all—everything! . . . I—I—deserve it! . . ."

A SUPREME TEST.

The tender humble utterance thrilled him through. He started to his feet, and looked eagerly round, almost with the expectation of meeting those blue eyes, like speedwell blossoms overflowing with dew, as they had last passed out of his sight.

But the room was empty. It felt desperately empty to Fred! He wanted Brenda, with a sudden overpowering desire.

"She never tried to hide it all from me. She had no thought of defending herself," he muttered, his gaze fixed on the opposite wall. "She might have done so. Many a girl would, in her place. What have I have been about? . . . Truthful! Yes! But are people to be judged through their whole lives from one lost battle? . . . Of course she was wrong, and she knew it didn't deny it! What more could she have done to repair the wrong? . . . She had enough to bear; and all I did was to make it worse for her. If she had tried to explain away to make herself out blameless if she had tried to deceive me but there was no attempt at a reservation."

He stood staring on the floor.

"Is it too late? Have I put off too long? It may be or it may not. Anyhow, I'll put matters to the test. If Brenda can be happy without me, I can't be happy without her."

His decision was taken. He forgot his "seediness," wrote two or three hurried notes to put off engagements on the morrow, packed a bag, and was soon on his way to that station from which, months earlier, he had witnessed Brenda's sorrowful departure. Not till he was actually off did it occur to him that the Bracys and their niece might chance to be away from home. But if so, he would obtain their address, and would follow them up.

He had suddenly found out what Brenda was to him. After all these months of steady resolution not to marry Brenda, all at once he did not know how to endure another twenty-four hours of delay. During the short journey he could think only of her. She might be angry with him; she might refuse an

interview; she might have succeeded in forgetting him, though he could not forget her. But go after her he would, if but to learn his fate.

Leaving his bag at the station, he walked to the house, through half-a-mile of country lanes. In the garden, before he came within sight of the front door, he unexpectedly stumbled upon Brenda herself, busy among her flowers. She looked a little thinner and a trifle older than he had known her in the past. Her eyes were turned away, and she



"A WISTFUL QUESTIONING GAZE."

did not see him till he stood by her side. Then her lips parted and grew pale, as if with a shock.

Debenham had meant to ask her pardon for staying away so long; but, somehow, he found at first a difficulty in saying anything. The sight of those blue eyes brought a curious unwonted lump into his throat. He held out his hand silently, and Brenda looked him full in the face, with a wistful questioning gaze. Then, slowly, her hand stole into his.

Still without a word, Fred bent and kissed her lips—white yet with the shock of seeing him. Brenda shrank away, and that restored his power of speech.

"Dear, I have judged you harshly and held aloof," he said, in husky tones. "But I—I am sorry, Bren. I ought to have helped you, dear—not to have run away. It must have seemed—hard."

"Yes; it has been hard," she murmured, with a sob in her voice. "Sometimes—very hard."

"It was wrong of me. Bren, can you forgive me? I can't get on without you any longer. . . . Dear—I love you. I love you with all my heart. Will you be my wife?"

"But—but"—and she held him off resolutely, when he would have drawn her close—"wait—listen! I did break my word that time. . . . I did, Fred! And if you could not trust me—I could not bear that. I would rather—never——"

Debenham's first answer was again a silent one; and she no longer resisted.

"I'll trust you, as I expect to be trusted myself," he said at length. "Until you prove to me that I must not. Will that do, my own?"

"Oh, yes: I think that will do," she whispered, smiling.

THE HISTORY OF A JOKE.

THERE was once a very poor, miserable little Joke, which was born on the lips of a working-man in a garret. The woman who was standing beside him did not smile. As it was quite void of oaths or any other insignia of the witticisms to which she was accustomed, perhaps she scarcely recognised it. Long ago, when she and he went "courting" into the country he had made many such—even poorer than this—and she had laughed over them, but that was so far away.

The Joke knew that it was very feeble, and it did not want to be born at all. As it looked round on the squalid surroundings it felt that it was the wrong thing in the wrong place. It felt it was almost heartless to be there, and its feelings were hurt that it had not succeeded in even causing a relaxation of the woman's features. In the earliest stage of its existence it felt secretly the bitterness of uselessness.

But it stayed with the man, and followed him through every detail of his miserable existence for many months without giving any further sign of life since that first unsuccessful effort. But one day it happened to be very pleasant: the sun was shining and the birds singing, and the man was in a good temper. He had stopped for a minute or two to talk to a friend of his wife's, and all of a sudden he made the Joke again. The poor little Joke felt its heart warmed, for they both laughed, and it thought it had done some good in the world. It did not know that the accidents of sunshine and happening to feel well had more to do with their good spirits than it had. Then it left the man, and he quite forgot it until long after when he met it again in such a grand new dress that he did not recognise it as his.

Now at the time when the Joke came into the outer world for the second time it so happened that there was a young man walking along the road just behind where the man and his friend were standing. Now this young man knew someone whom he liked very much and wanted to marry. For more than five years he had been working very hard, trying to earn enough to make a home for her, and it was only this very day that he had found something to do which would make it possible for him to marry her at once: so he was very happy and everything in the world seemed delightful. When he heard the Joke he thought it was the best that had ever been made, and when it left the man it came to him.

After this it led anything but an idle life. That very day it was so hard-worked it felt

THE HISTORY OF A JOKE.

quite twisted in and out, and thought it must die of fatigue. The young man (whose name was Charles) met two acquaintances in the street, and told it to each of them, perhaps to excuse himself for the smiles which he could not restrain and which otherwise might have led people to think him demented. He laughed so heartily himself that his friends could not resist the infection, whatever their opinion of his witticism, and the Joke began to think that it had been too humble and that there must be something in it after all.

The Joke not only managed to go with the two friends on visits to various acquaintances of theirs (they fancied there must surely be some occult beauty in it which they had failed to perceive), but it accompanied Charles to the house of his sweetheart, where he even found time to tell it to her, and she, of course, laughed at it, but as she had been smiling through the whole of the interview the Joke came to the conclusion that she was a giddy girl, and her opinion was not to be depended upon.

To Charles the Joke had a value quite apart from its intrinsic merits. He mixed up his own happiness with the amusement he thought it caused him, but as he did not know this he thought the delight it had given him ought to be passed on to every possible person. He told it to his sweetheart's mother, and two brothers, and three sisters, and her cousin; he told it to the servant who let him out at the door, and to the old crossing-sweeper to whom he was accustomed to give a penny (increased for the day to a shilling). He told it to his landlady at the same time that he mentioned his approaching marriage. The waitress heard it when she brought up his breakfast, and the Boots as he went out.

The Joke began to give itself airs.

Charles was a clerk in an office (which he hoped soon to leave), and after he had told the Joke to the other clerks, and sat for some hours on a high stool, with his heels caught on to the spindles, and the end of a long pen in his mouth, the head of the firm sent for him to give him directions about some letters

he wished written. The young man listened in respectful silence till his employer had finished, but the Joke was determined to be heard, and before the interview closed Charles felt impelled to repeat it. The principal looked at him in horrified stony astonishment, and reflected that it was a great pity it was impossible to dismiss him, as he had already dismissed himself.

If you can imagine what an elephant feels like when a fly buzzes in his ear, you have a faint impression of the principal's sensation of outraged dignity when one of his clerks ventured to make a joke. All other ways failing, he marked his pained surprise and displeasure by looking pointedly towards the door. He reflected, however, that it must have been a very remarkable joke which could cause so heart-rending a breach of etiquette.

"I am not a judge of jests," he thought. So at dinner that night he shouted it into the ear of the Mayor, who sat beside him, with a diamond star hanging on a gold chain round his neck, which was enough to have extinguished any joke. Nevertheless, he heaved up and down once or twice, as much as possible, which the guests having observed, they concluded he had laughed, and all begged to know the cause of so satisfactory and original an occurrence, laughter not being consistent with the dignity of a Mayor of a small provincial town unless very grave cause be shown. When they had heard the Joke they fully agreed that the reason was quite sufficiently serious, and they begged the Official Recorder to have the facts duly inscribed and made part of the civic history. The Joke thus was enabled to feel that steps were taken to secure its immortality, even if it did get mixed up with the statistics of births and deaths and marriages—and dinner parties.

The Mayor treasured up this jest, though he thought it better not to waste it on his wife. All his intimate friends had, unfortunately, been at the banquet.

But one day his opportunity came. As Mayor, it was his self-imposed duty to receive

and walk round the town with an unfortunate personage who had come on private business and amusement of his own. But the ubiquitous "our reporter" was, as usual, to the fore, and had announced the forthcoming visit in letters three feet long, to the great distress of mind and indignation of the unlucky and ill-advised visitor.

A cheering crowd received him at the station; the Mayor's little girl gave him a huge bouquet of flowers (the unfortunate personage was young and sensitive); the Mayor's wife took his arm; the Mayor's wife's feminine friends, in outrageous bonnets, all shook hands with him; the Mayor's great-aunt made him a speech, to which he, scarlet with confusion, gave a strangled and incoherent reply, halting especially over the answer to her minute and pointed enquiries as to his political views with regard to her sex—a reply duly printed by "our reporter" in next morning's issue; the Mayor's secretary bowed him into the Mayor's carriage; and—the Mayor told him the Joke. It was the one ray of light which gleamed dimly across the scarcely relieved darkness of the day, and when all the rest had sunk into the horror of oblivion, it alone remained, a prominent impression.

The consequence was that a few days later he told it to a Maid of Honour, to whom he was paying attention, just when the King was standing behind the Queen's chair. He said it in a low voice, but the King's ears were sharp, the only things about him that were so. He heard; though he and the Maid of Honour were alike in being too refined to smile in the Queen's own presence.

For the next week the King was very much occupied with the State accounts, which would not come right by sevenpence-halfpenny. He had no time to think of the people or the Queen or jests, or any such frivolities. But at the end of the week there was great excitement at Court. The King had made a joke.

The courtiers trembled, and wondered what would happen next. The old ones walked

about, taking snuff, and blessing their stars, and declaring that they never remembered such a thing in all their experience of royalty. The Queen fainted. She thought such an unprecedented occurrence could not but portend something terrible. No one ventured to suggest that it was not original.

After a great deal of minute research it was discovered that it was permissible for kings to make jests (although, until now, it was not on record that they had availed themselves of their privileges), and the Prime Minister graciously, and in his most dignified manner, communicated this honoured joke to a delighted, loyal, and recognisant people. What an advantage telegraphic communication is, to be sure! Within twenty-four hours the universe had burst into a roar of laughter.

After this the Joke discovered that it was the most remarkable one ever made. No dinner party, Cabinet Council, or political meeting was complete without it; no evening paper would have disgraced itself by omitting it from the Fact and Fancy column; the morning papers elegantly introduced it into leaders, not to speak of giving it a little paragraph to itself now and then.

Later on German commentators wrote notes on it in twenty-eight volumes, each person proving it to be a distinct variety of jest from pun to bull. More ephemeral writers gave forth volumes (elegantly got up in blue and silver) on "The Joke: its use in modern society, as exemplified, &c." The Buttons who was handing potatoes to the King at the memorable moment was the hero of a thousand interviews, and retired into private life on the large fortune made for him by his book, "Wot i rememember ov the king's goak." Later on he married a duke's daughter, and novels from his pen were much sought after.

But perhaps the greatest credit should be given to a countryman of our own, who wrote an elaborate and learned treatise to prove that the Joke was not a joke at all; that it was uttered all too seriously, and

that by various transpositions of its letters it could be shown to have correctly prophesied all the important events which had since taken place during a period of a hundred years. Many learned persons accept this dissertation, though comparatively short (being only seventeen volumes in all), as conclusive. But for persons who wish for an extraordinary short and succinct account of nearly all the arguments, we would recommend Smith's primer of *The King's Joke*, in four volumes and an appendix.

Very, very gradually the joke declined, and as it became feebler and more worn-out its popularity waned, till at length, in its extreme old age, it retired within the leaves of a jest-book, only making an unutterably pathetic appearance in public life when the pantomimes and circuses found they could not get on without it, or a comic paper had a space it was impossible to fill. There it will remain till it is forcibly resuscitated to supply the needs of a future generation.

M. RACHEL.

PRACTICAL SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM.

I REMEMBER well the juvenile scorn with which I first listened to a lecture on "style." The word seemed to mean to me then, what I fancy it means to most beginners—*affectation*—an effect to be fine—something unnatural and, therefore, unlovable. Now this is exactly what "style" does not mean; it means the use of the one word which not only conveys your exact meaning, but which will mean exactly the same thing to your reader as it does to you; the word which will make your meaning stand out clear from the page; not the word or phrase which will best show your learning or research, but that one which will raise exactly the same quality of emotion in the reader which you felt in writing; to do this, even though it should cost infinite pains and labours, is to be natural—not unnatural.

Everyone knows how an actress, in studying her work, has to labour to acquire the right break of the voice for sorrow, the right note for joy, the straitened breath of contempt. In learning all this, she is only regaining the gifts which nature gave to her, lost through an English habit of restraining or veiling every emotion, for who ever heard a little child speak in a tone of voice discordant with its subject, whether telling its own troubles, or the imaginary troubles of some nursery hero. "Style," indeed is absolute truth to one's subject—the one means of perfect accord between writer and reader.

"We saw the trees in the hot bright weather
Clear cut with shadows very black"

says William Morris, in his poem "Riding Together." No line could be simpler than the latter of these two, and yet how perfectly it gives the dry heat of the day, the clearness and brightness of late spring in the East.

If we consider the lines we know why the outline of the trees stood clear out against the sky, only when the air is utterly free from mist; the shadows are very black when the sun shines at its full strength in an unclouded sky. We have not time to consciously realise this in reading the poem, but the words raise a feeling of warmth and dryness—because feeling is invariably speedier than thought.

Again, Rossetti, in "The White Ship," tells how the moment after the wreck—

"What was man—and what was a ship?
Mere toys and splinters in the sea's grip."

There is no fine writing there—no affectation, no ponderous accumulation of adjectives; but no words could give us a keener sense of the feebleness of men and their works opposed to the force of nature.

Students of style should read Robert Louis Stevenson, and note how a single adjective makes a scene or a character as real to us as it was in the mind of the writer, simply because it is the one adjective which will express exactly the one thing he meant, and nothing else. This is "Style." To express

your meaning so clear that no one can have a moment's doubt about it.

"But what have journalists to do with style?" you may ask. No one expects them to be Rossetti's or Stevenson's. When we have painfully acquired the power of expressing ourselves exactly, what good will it be to us?"

It will be this much good—everything you write will be readable, no matter how uninteresting your subject.

Let me give another analogy. You have seen the pictures of girls on chocolate boxes—their faces have every item that goes to make up conventional beauty, faultless complexions, abundant hair, large eyes, and so on, and probably no living human being ever cared to look at one of them twice. On the other hand, have you not seen a drawing or a portrait of a plain face that fills you with interest, simply because it has the qualities of life and character; it can speak to you, you feel there might be such a girl and you could be sorry for her, or fond of her, or glad for her sake.

So your description of something dull and commonplace in itself, if it is only quite like that thing, if it gives a true picture of that thing to your readers, will be more attractive reading than a bald and commonplace account of a much more interesting event. An account of a pitched battle may be tame; an account of a school treat admirable reading. If you are only sending an account of a local wedding to be published without payment in a society journal, it is possible to show yourself a good writer or a bad one.

Use few adjectives, but choose them well, find out the etymology of a word that is, what it meant at the first—before you trust it in an emergency. Matthew Arnold, in one of his finest essays—just given as a lecture to the Eton boys—traces a certain Greek word through the changing meanings of fifteen hundred years in order to arrive at a true understanding of it. You cannot all do this, but you have dictionaries which will give you derivations, and if a word

is good enough to use at all, it is good enough to understand thoroughly.

Take the words "graceful" and "gracious," for instance, both from the same source, expressed by the same word (*graceuse*) in French—yet, because of our different national characteristics, the more English form has come to suggest reserved charm, the more French, over-flowing kindness; or take the words "walk" and "march," originally equivalents, but because of the martial bearing of the Normans who used the former, and the more peaceful ways of the Saxons, who used the latter, the two words have now distinct meanings.

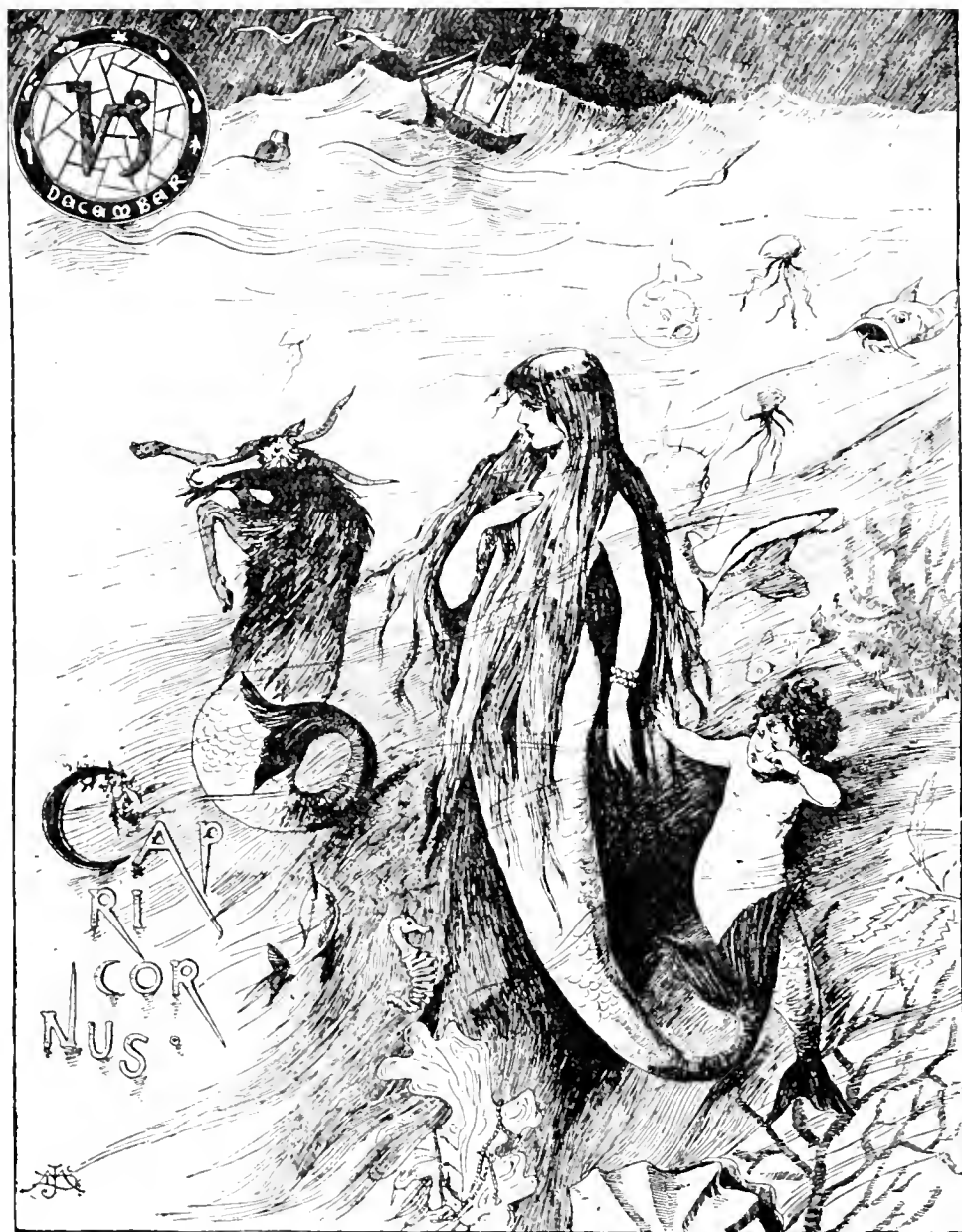
And a vague story floats in my mind of an American President to whom a political message was read:

"*Le Gouvernement Française demande.*"

"Demands!" cried the President. "Then we won't do it. Let them *ask* civilly if they want it, and not take that tone with us. Demands, indeed!"

Now it is not to be expected that people who read your account of the local flower show will consider or care for the etymology of the words you use, but they will feel the sensations your words convey, they will find your article readable or the reverse according to the skill with which you have expressed yourself, even when they do not know, and certainly could not say, in what the skill lies. They will not feel that you have told them anything, but that you have reminded them of something they already know, and they will be more grateful to you for your giving them this feeling of partnership in your ideas than if you had exhibited your own separate smartness by the pageful.

For next month's exercise let our students give a description of five people in a small room, written as if for the commencement of a story. The best study, of course, will be that which presents the most vivid picture of the group. Papers must not exceed five hundred words, and must be sent in on or before December 20th.



DECEMBER.

A N OLD-FASHIONED CAROL.

Long, long, and long ago
On a day of wind and snow
In the grey of morn,
In a town called Nazareth
Us to win from Sin and Death
Little Christ was born.
By, by, lullay!

Kings' sons have golden gear
Kings' daughters for their fere,*
Lordes for their grooms:
Minstrels make a merry noise
When they hear a babe's voice
In the palace rooms;
By, by, lullay!

But to greet Godde's son
Minstrels make music none,
Harpers all were dumb,
Only stars were bold to sing
Honouring the little King
That was newly come.
By, by, lullay!

Mary wrapped Him not in silk
Nor linen white as milk,
Wrought with woven gold;
Him but her streaming hair
Fenced from the morning air
That was white with cold.
By, by, lullay!

Mary sang "By lullay
Sleep, King, that so you may
Grow tall for the Rood;
Sleep and grow strong that you
May break my heart in two,
When it seemeth good."
By, by, lullay!

All the stars shining clear
Stooped low that they might hear,
Stooped till Earth caught
Light ere the dawn was free
Christ on his mother's knee
Heard and said naught.
By, by, lullay!

NORA HOPPER.

* Company.

A MANIA, BY A MANIAC.

I BEGAN it. I confess my crime. It was the intoxicating draught of success, in the form of a ten-guinea prize for the correct discovery of a missing word, that was the primal cause of the mania. After this Mary began guessing the acrostics in the *World*, (and ended, I verily believe, by trying to guess *all* the acrostics in *all* the world). John caught the fever next, and I found him surreptitiously going in for blot competitions and picture puzzles, his special bent being figure-drawing. Then Jane plunged head over ears into Raphael Tuck. When I came upon her for the twentieth time in one day almost buried in the family Bible, I began to think that she was the victim of religious frenzy. However, as it turned out, she was only seeking for texts, on the subject of Rest, and Jim, seated on the floor by her side, with Shakespeare, Browning, Tennyson, Wordsworth, Keats, Cowper, Burns, and a few other poetical works and books of reference, was merely searching for quotations to be placed underneath the illustrations of an almanac.

He looked up at me with a distrait expression. "Do you remember any line in *any* of the poets, about a renunculus, Kate?" he asked. His voice sounded hollow, his eyes were bloodshot, and his face haggard. "I have a renunculus here in the almanac and I must find an appropriate line. Who is the most unpoetical of the poets? Because it doesn't seem to rhyme with anything, does it?" His tone was terribly pathetic.

If there had been no mathematical problems, I believe my father would have escaped unharmed, but the moment I saw him with pencil and paper, his brow knitted, and a blue publication on his knee, I knew his fate, too, was sealed.

Our spare money melted away in stamps—stamps for postage—stamps for enclosure. Our brains reeled with geographical, historical, poetical, Biblical, mathematical, and

biographical information.

We started on tours of inspection to the nurseries of the neighbourhood, that we might glean the most humorous of childish sayings. We wrote wildly-impossible accounts of hair-breadth escapes, of startling burglaries, of thrilling meetings. With pale faces and weary fingers we defined everything definable in the most witty manner we could muster.

We answered riddles, we found quotations, we flattered editors with complimentary conundrums; we wrote sonnets, the initial and final letters of each line being thoughtfully supplied for us (a thought we could have dispensed with); we wrote epitaphs on all the dead celebrities and on a number of the living ones. We assumed a hot-headed Radical spirit for the papers of that persuasion, and wrote with a burning sense of loyalty and Conservatism "for Queen and country" sentiment—to those of the Tory party. We buried poets and raised them up again. We hunted for rivers, we unearthed towns; we drew maps of England, of Ireland, of the Cannibal Islands—and we *endeavoured* to persuade two thousand people to take in a paper regularly, that we might spend a fortnight on the Continent, at the best hotels, free of charge.

The only thing *dim* won, was his passage to America, which was a pity, for, as he remarked, they had not provided a return passage nor any money to keep him while there, so he was obliged regretfully to decline the reward of his labours.

Mary had the tremendous good fortune to win a £100 prize, but, unhappily, two hundred others won the same thing, and £100 divided by two hundred does not leave exactly a fortune to each competitor.

For the rest of us: I gained 15s. in addition to my former winnings; John received 12s. 6d.; Jane, five elaborate gift-books; and my father, nothing at all.

We were mere shadows of our former selves; Mary had acquired the hungry, eager, restless eye of a miser seeking for hidden

treasure—James and John might have been taken for Monte Carlo's most deluded victims; my father's hair had whitened considerably, and I found unmistakable grey streaks in my own. The house was at sixes and sevens, and the disease had spread to the kitchen. Cook was frequently too much absorbed in standard works of English authors to notice the meat burning to a cinder, or the cat eating up the veal cutlets. There was scarcely any conversation between us, for we were all following different bents. Our food was hastily snatched between whiles, with a book in one hand. Our sleep was broken, and the "mid-night oil" often burnt till the early morning hours.

John was turned out of his office. His employers thought he had taken to drink. Poor fellow, he had no time for that. My father left everything to his head clerk, and did not even profess to attend to business. People began to look suspiciously at us as we went laden with packages to the post office (our daily and only recreation).

Things grew worse, and one day John, in a fit of unmanly weakness, said: "What good has the whole thing done us?"

"Good?" roared my father, "Good, do you say? I should like to know indeed! Good? I declare I see nothing but noughts and crosses wherever I turn my eyes. I count the very morsels I eat, and the flies on the ceiling. Good?—and for all this, I get what? *Nothing!* But I *will*, before I have finished, I will get something out of them, the swindlers." His hand fell on the table, and mechanically the fingers closed round a pencil and I saw his lips moving, "three-fifths plus one and two-eighths, plus—"

"Why not give it up?" I said.

They all dropped their pencils and stared open-mouthed at me.

"Give it up?" they cried aghast. "Give it up *now!* You must be mad, Kate!"

They are still going on, and so am I, but I write this as a means of saving my friends from a similar fate.



No. 370.

THE MARGIN OF THE MERE.

Val Davis.

AT THE INSTITUTE, PICCADILLY.

THE Fourteenth Exhibition of the Painters in Oil Colours can hardly be said to have far outstripped its fore-runners, for though there are, of course, many interesting pictures, there are none that call forth exceptional enthusiasm or portray any startling amount of originality; but, on the other hand, there are fewer really bad pictures (save the mark) than usual.

Among the figure subject pictures G. G. Kilburne's "Distinguished Visitor" claims immediate attention, and is a charming portrayal of the picturesque period of silk stockings and short waists. "Where Ignorance is Bliss," treating about the same time, is a very clever work by John A. Lomas; the combinations of reds in "Grandpapa's" coat, arm-chair, and handkerchief are very happy. A very pleasing little bit of colour is "The Spinning Wheel," by Carlton A. Smith, representing one of his charming home interiors with the accompanying graceful

maiden. In the Central Gallery he has another small picture of a girl sitting dreaming before the fire, and called, "When the day dies, the day's work should end" (183); but "An Interruption" (459) in the last room is his largest picture, a very bright work which would be quite charming if only the girl's mouth were smaller.

Not far from the "Spinning Wheel" hangs Mr. Fred. Cotman's beautiful landscape "Hereford" (17) full of delicate mist and sunset glow, which enhances the reflections in the peaceful water. Another small canvas which has the true touch of nature, is "A Surrey Mill-pond" (20), by W. C. Pilsbury. Miss Ursula Wood's "Cabbage Rose" (19) is rather puzzling. Is the little child to be of fairy height, or are the cabbages giants? Mr. Alexander Harrison's "Garden in Grez" cannot be passed without calling attention, but "A Portrait Sketch" (24), by J. Collier, is hardly up to that clever artist's usual mark.

Very rich in tone is Mr. H. R. Steer's dark landscape "When the West is burning, from

shaven fields returning" (28) which shows the gleaners toiling homeward along a high bank, while below lies a dull stagnant pool dimly reflecting the dying sunset. Over the door is a clever study of a smiling child playing with a black doll, "Mother's little Alabama Coon" (29), by Lewis Cohen. Another fine study is Mr. J. Watson Nicol's "Cateran" (33), the painting of the man's head being very strong.

A very charming picture, of which happily we have been able to reproduce the photograph, is the "Lion Tamer" (45) by Mrs. M. Murray Cookesley. It has also a double interest to the admirers of this artist's work, being quite a new departure from the Oriental subjects which have made her name, but though the subject is new, the work and colouring are quite as fine as usual, as may be noted in the rich red of the lion tamer's robe. The model, by-the-way, was a favourite one of the late Lord Leighton; and the royal pair were sketched at the Zoo. A very useful place is the Zoo, to artists. Another picture in which there is an animal, or rather, a biped, and that a stuffed one, is Mr. W. Maw Egley's "Telemachus and Minerva" (49), cleverly painted and worked out, for though there is also a reproduction of this picture, attention

should be called to the way the story of Telemachus is suggested by the portrait of Fenelon on the chair, the engraving of the Parthenon on the floor, the boat in the corner, and the sea-scape on the wall. The sea is again recalled in Mr. W. H. Weatherhead's "Waiting" (48), a charming fisher-girl, fascinating, as he knows how to make his maidens.

A very clever study is Mr. J. W. Perrin's "Autumn's Bounty" (52) a group of "Blow Puffs" or field-clocks, which really look as though they could be blown away; and M. Brown's "On the Shore" (53) is a brown sketch that should be noticed. Mr. Arthur Wardle's "Scratch Poll-Polly" (58), a child with parrot and dogs, cannot compare with his fine painting of "A Leopard Resting" (272), in the Central Gallery; but both Mr. E. M. Wimperis' Dartmoor landscapes are charming; "A Flood on the Lyn" (62) is full of life, and equally fine is 334, in the East Gallery. "Barnaby Rudge at the County Justices" (72) is a strong, though hardly satisfactory picture on a whole; parts are fine and the raven is a splendid bit of work, but there seems a want of balance in the composition, and surely poor dear Barnaby

had not such a terribly mis-shapen head. In the same way there seems something wanting to make Mr. T. B. Kennington's "Crystal" (79) a finished work, though the dark eyes of "future-seeker" hold and follow you in a wonderful way.

There is some beautiful colour and work in H. Pilleau's "Jerusalem from the Hill of Scopus" (85), and his "Rialto, Venice" (316), and "San Salute" (360).





Mrs. M. Marquet

THE LION TAMER.



John R. Reid's "Fairy Queen,"
HOLMBURY HILL.

are even finer still and show what wonderful command this veteran artist still holds over his brush. Some finely studied work is to be found in "An Interior" (91), by Miss Edith Sprague, but it is so polished and clean one really wishes that a little dust might have been left somewhere, just to relieve the eye; but Mrs. Edith Taylor's "Sunny Pool" (94) is a very bright canvas. "The Village Barber" (97) of Mr. John White will attract attention, and would be a fine picture were not the three groups of two rather disconcerting in the composition.

W. Llewellyn's "Labour of Love" (105), a young girl in white arranging flowers, is a wonderful combination of whites and brilliant coloured blossoms, and sure to call for much notice; as will also Mr.

John R. Reid's "Fairy Queen," which represents a poverty-stricken interior where the mother, a frail worn woman, is putting the finishing touches to the gauzy skirts of the fairy queen and bread-winner, while the little sick brother in bed looks on with interest. The Fairy Queen herself is well posed, and would be a pleasing girlish figure if only the outstretched right arm were not so large. A curious landscape is Mr. A. D. Peppercorn's "Surrey Village" (116), but it will doubtless find many admirers.

Very intent is the golden-haired mite who with an enormous Bible (?) before her is "Preaching to the Heathen" (119), the heathen being represented by some half-dozen splendidly painted Japanese masks, and this is by far the most successful of Mr. St. George Hare's three works. The others are "Listen" (176) and the "Death of William the Conqueror" (397). Graceful as Mr. G. Sheridan Knowles always is, his "Impromptu" (125) seems a trifle heavy in tone, though the posing of the girl dancing and the visitor looking on are



No. 49. TELEMACHUS AND MINERVA. W. Mrs. F.



No. 360.

SAN SALUTE, VENICE.

H. Pilleau, R.I.M.

composed group, and does not look—like so many still-life paintings—as though every object had been freshly dusted. Another charmingly easy composition, though of a quite different style, is Mr. Breakspere's "Chez Romney" (163). Close by is a quaint little fairy picture called "Secrets" (164) by Miss Amy Sawyer, so full of rich colours and life; it is

both good. A delightful child picture is William E. Evans's "Keeping School" (28), where a sweet little maid in green velvet is seated on a large book and teaching a row of cosmopolitan dolls from another book on her knees, while round the corner of the large book peeps a mischievous looking kitten. Close by are two charming pearly sea-scapes (129 and 131), by G. S. Walters.

One of the first pictures to attract you in the Central Gallery is the beautiful misty, autumn-tinted, landscape of "Richmond, Yorkshire" (143), by Fred. G. Cotman, from which, as you watch it, the mist seems almost to roll away; near it is Mr. Dollman's "Two heads are better than one" (145) and Mr. Joseph Clark's bright picture of "A feast in view," three pretty children on a cottage door-step dividing a plate of cherries. A very clever still-life is E. G. Handel Lucas's "The Source of many Sorrows" (157), but though the cards, dice, etc., may truly agree with the title, the friendly "pipe and baccy" is also often an aid "in many sorrows;" the whole forms a well

a pity the fairies are not a little more distinct. "Merry Gambols" (174) is as sweet as ever, and painted with all Madame Ronner's knowledge of kittens and their ways; yet one cannot help wishing that one day she will give us something new in animal life, just to give the kittens a rest, for her other picture "Lost in Wonder" (281), in the same room, is still kittens.

Mr. Edgar Bundy's "Joan of Arc" (190) is a very fine study showing the Maid in full



No. 320.

OLD LOCK ON THE SOAR.

James Orchard

VILLANELLE.

armour and with head thrown back in prayer, or in listening to the voices; close by is Mr. Haynes King's bright picture of three girls "Gossiping" (192). A very clever work by the door is Mr. Hacher's portrait of "The Artist's Mother" (203); it is full of delicate care and firm handling. Soft and tender is the colouring in "What shall I say?" (211) by Mr. W. A. Breakspere, where a dark-haired girl is pausing over an all important letter; and another pretty little subject picture is Mr. Sheridan Knowles' "Good Night" (217). Most interesting is Mr. Nettleship's "Circe's Watch Tower" (218) for he has added figure work to his well known animal painting, and the beautifully posed figure of Circe is surrounded by attendant in the shape of a fine tiger, over whose head her arm is resting, and a large snake on the other side, while forming a canopy over her head is a enormous eagle with outspread wings. Two landscapes of mark are "Holmbury Hill" (200), by the Vice-President, and "Old Lock on the Soar" (320) by Mr. Orrock, both of which we are able to reproduce.

Of M. Fantin-Latour's three works, two are in this room, 241 being brilliant flowers and 247 "Fruits of Delicious Vines, etc." (247), both painted in all his finished style. Between them is Sir James Linton's only picture in this exhibition, representing a dark-haired maiden in a wondrous red satin robe, in "Meditation" (244). Two charming little works of quite different styles are Mrs. Ellen Frank's pretty Japanese girl "Crysanthemums" (256) and Mr. Robert Morley's delightful "Under One Umbrella," two beautifully painted toads sitting under a bright red toad-stool.

In the East Gallery is A. Chevallier Taylor's clever picture of "Enoch Arden" (290) out in the cold dark night gazing hoplessly into the warmth and glow of Phillip's home. Very curious is the arrangement of the beautiful head in Mr. Stock's "Dead Summer" (308), if it is meant as a sort of companion picture to his water colour of

the "Death-of-Love Plant," in the Spring Exhibition; the stalks are not enough connected to the head, but the colouring throughout is very lovely. Mr. S. Melton Fisher's "Meditation" (365) is a charming arrangement of delicate colouring, and the girl herself is pretty; so also is "Under the Vine" (373), by John Godward, and the hands also deserve special attention. Mr. Val Davis has a beautifully dreamy landscape in "The Margin of the Mere" (370), and a little further on is Mr. T. B. Kennington's best picture, "Memories," a half-nude figure of a kneeling girl, in which the pose and subdued tints are very good. Attention must be called to Mr. Foster's clever "They all love Jack" (407); and Mr. Nettleship's fine lion "Lying-in-Wait" (408).

VILLANELLE.

Oh dream again
Of happy hours that are no more,
And ease your pain.

Think that we twain
Are wandering still along the shore,
Oh dream again.

Or would you fain
Forget those golden days of yore,
And ease your pain?

What do you gain?
You lose the best of memory's store,
Oh dream again.

Now life is vain,
Think that love's brightness came before,
And ease your pain.

Time's hand has lain
In tenderest touch at our heart's core,
Oh dream again.
And ease your pain.

CONSTANCE BERKELEY MARGETTS.



O N THINGS IN GENERAL.

"I don't see how we are to talk of anything but the three deaths this afternoon," said the debutante, sadly.

"But we need not talk altogether gloomily, even if we do," answered the chaperon. "Do you remember, any of you, what George Macdonald says, in one of his books, about some deaths being like the harvesting of ripe corn—beautiful, because exactly in season. A day's delay when the corn is ready would be a disaster. Du Maurier's death made me think of that. I am not speaking of the sorrow of those for whom death is loss whether it comes too soon or too late, but of the artist himself. He had had from life just what he had asked from it, and been satisfied when he had it; what more could any one ask?"

"I thought he wanted, when he was young, to go on the stage?" said the younger sister.

"I daresay; so do you, don't you?" said the engaged girl. "I suppose every romantic person wants to go on the stage at some time or other of their lives. Luckily, the mood soon passes for most of us."

"I don't think the desire was very deep with Du Maurier at any time; at least, one is told that from a child his dearest ambition was to be an artist and draw for *Punch*. In the end he almost became *Punch*; one wonders how the paper will get on without him."

"It doesn't seem a very great ambition," said the debutante, doubtfully, "to draw for a comic paper."

"You are thinking of *Punch* of to-day," said the bride. "I am lucky enough to have several bound years of the old time numbers when *Punch* was much more than a mere comic paper. You see Du Maurier at his very best in them; latterly, he got a little stereotyped and tame, perhaps, but his earlier work seems to me to be very much cleverer than anything we see to-day."

"What is it like?" asked the engaged girl. "I only knew him by his beautiful tall women."

"I don't know enough about Art ever to be quite sure of myself when I try to speak the language," said the bride, "but he seems to me to have been one of the first impressionists, that is, one of the first people to draw life and nature as it appears to anyone with two eyes. Not scientifically, as we know it is, or conventionalised, as we think it ought to be, but exactly as it appears. His old river pictures, for instance, with the sky right up at the top of the page, just as you see it from your boat, and the mist hanging about the banks. He could get so much *weather* into four inches by seven of black and white, any kind of weather—frost, or dry heat, or fog. There is a drawing of his of two "Swells" of the day, lamenting the impossibility of crossing the muddy street, and hoping they would meet again later, on the same side of the street, that makes one actually *feel* the transparent-reflecting dampness of London's bad weather it is the most expressive black and white drawing I know."

"And that parody of his, that you showed me in the 1866 volume," said Cousin May. "The Braunibrindis verses, you know, and the

drawings parodying the new school in painting and poetry; how clever they are, and how charming. A perfect parody, because it is so good humoured; it does not set you against the things parodied. There is no malice in it; no unkindness. You enjoy it in itself, and don't feel offended in your serious admirations. I could fancy Burn-Jones and Rossetti and Morris enjoying those verses as much as we did."

"He was just a little more severe in his books, perhaps," said the chaperon, "and that brings us back to his fulfilled wishes again; he had always said he meant to write a successful novel before he died; he wrote two which deserved success, and won it."

"Is it true that in spite of the success of 'Trilby,' he liked 'Peter Ibertson' the best and said it was a better book than the other?" asked the girl of three seasons.

"I hope so," said Cousin May, "because I love 'Peter Ibertson' so much myself. I think it is one of the most beautiful books ever written; it makes one feel as if one loved both the author and his characters personally."

"That's why one is so sorry when these great people die," said the debutante. "They are so much more our friends than the disagreeable people in the next square who come to tea with us and say spiteful things. I cried when I read that Morris was dead. I don't suppose that I ever should have met him, but I liked to think that perhaps some day I might. I don't always like his longer poems, but I love the shorter ones."

"Morris is so tender," said the chaperon. "His lovers are always so kindly, so gentle. It seems a funny thing to say of a poet's characters, but one feels they would make good husbands. Do you remember the one who, trying to imagine a meeting with his lady in which he could tell his love, pictures her as 'not looking very well.' He felt he could gather courage when she was ill or troubled and needed his comfort. How sorry one is when that man is hanged; and that other man, the soldier, who, while ambushed,

in the grass waiting for the coming of the enemy, finds the bones of a girl who has died with her lover; and falls dreaming what she was like while alive, and pictures her so sweet and shrinking and gentle that her death seems a thousand times more pitiful. And then 'The Ballad of Shameful Death,' how creepy it makes one feel."

"Have you ever noticed," said the girl of three seasons, "that great men so often die in groups of three; when ever two die one waits anxiously for the next, and everyone thinks of the man one admires most and hopes it will not be he?"

"I felt like that, too," said the younger sister, "I knew the man I admired most and was afraid for him, but I was just as sorry when the Archbishop of Canterbury died."

"And yet that was a beautiful death, too," said the chaperon. "No one could ask a better death than to die quietly after a long life of good work. The suddenness is a shock to the living, but most men would rather die suddenly. Charles Kingsley always dreaded a lingering death. The sudden death we pray against in the litany means a death for which we are not ready."

"I wonder if he was proud of his son's success as an author," said the debutante.

"I am sure I hope he was," said Cousin May. Do you wonder why I am so emphatic? Well, I'll tell you. Among my journalistic work a little while ago, I undertook to write accounts of celebrated people for a monthly publication. I thought I should like it, but I didn't. You have no idea how tiresome some of the people were. Of course they wanted to be in the book, or they wouldn't have consented; but after they had consented some of the new ones, who were not quite used to being celebrated, were so grand I felt as if I should have to climb up a ladder to talk to them. One or two were charming. Mrs. Manington-Caffyn was so bright and pleasant that it was a pleasure to write about her. We are all very sorry, are we not, that her husband, Dr. Caffyn, is dead. That is another to add to

the sad group; he was clever and nice, but had been suffering from over work for a long time."

"But about 'Dodo' Benson?" asked the debutante.

"He was abroad. I had to interview him by letter. I had to ask him, more or less, to tell me all about himself. There were all sorts of silly stories told about his conceit after the success of 'Dodo,' and I felt very nervous about writing to him. Well—you know how difficult it is to write about yourself and not seem conceited or egotistical. He seemed to understand the situation exactly. He wrote a long letter, giving me every detail I wanted—practically doing my work for me in fact, and yet so far from being egotistical it shewed nothing but good breeding and kindness, and that delicious sense of humour which makes the wheels of life run smoothly—and yet at the end there was a request that I would destroy the letter because it was all about himself. Of course I destroyed it, but I thought it a pity, for it was one of the nicest letters I ever received.

"By the way, as to the sketch of the portable frock," said the chaperon.

"Instead of a sketch, I will give you a description of what I meant. I did not use flowered brocade because it suggested a dressing-gown. I choose a good silver grey moire which would not crush. The sleeves and the neck border are of old lace—set at the edge of the silk, not laid on it. The neck shows through. The frock is unlined, but there is a stiff cord round the hem, and bands of fine elastic keep the sleeve puffs in place. The whole will roll up into such small compass that it can be put into an ordinary dressing bag, or wrap case. It *might* go in a pocket, that is to say the big under pockets our grandmothers wore."

NORA VYNNE.

LAST month I called attention to the forthcoming production of "The Girl at the Dower House, and Afterwards," by Miss Agnes Giberne. The volume is now before me, in

its handsome binding of red and gold, and I am indebted to it for some delightful reading. The novelist has cunningly weaved a sequel to the wooing and winning of Rhea out of her early married life, showing the wayward girl a victim to the *ennui* of a quiet country life, and girding against the studious tastes of her doting husband. Especially good is the incident where Cliffe, recalling what pleasure the dead Nannie experienced from a similar visit, takes her to the British Museum for an afternoon's diversion: the effect on Rhea's stifled cravings for excitement may be imagined! How her slumbering love for him is at length awakened when she thinks that she has lost him for ever, is admirably told. Nor is the second heroine, Ursula, forgotten; we have many fresh glimpses of this fascinating personality and are left with an implied assurance of her betrothal to a man in every way worthy of her love. (W. and R. Chambers, 6s.)

MR. ANDREW LANG has given us in several volumes the store of his delvings in Fairy Lore: he has now turned his attention to the no less fascinating study of animal life. The result is the charming "Animal Story Book," which Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co. have just issued. Although ostensibly for the young, I must confess to a feeling of reluctance in laying the volume down with the last page. The treatment has been so Catholic; from elephants to ants, from panthers to poodles, one is led on by the spell of the anecdotes. Side by side with the classic stories of Bucephalus and Androcles are the tame pets of Dumas Pere and the Munchausen adventures of Baron Wogan. The stories of the great French novelist are particularly diverting, the quaint humour of the original being admirably translated. Birds, frogs, and insects all have their share in the collection, and one adds much to one's fund of useful facts in the perusal of them. For instance, one learns that the Haleyon is proved by modern naturalists to be synonymous for the King-



A RAVEN'S FUNERAL.

From *The Animal Story Book*.

fisher and that "Neptune, who loved these small, gay-plumaged creatures, took pity on them, and kept the waves still during the time of their sitting, so that by-and-by the days in a man's life that were free from storm and tempest became known as his 'halcyon days,' by which name you will still hear them called." The book is profusely embellished with excellent illustrations by H. G. Ford, an example of which we are permitted to reproduce. "Animal Stories" should be in great demand as a gift book both to children and their elders.

THE perennial flow of Mrs. Molesworth's pen continues to present us with healthy, cheery literature for the young people. With each Christmas season come several volumes bearing her name, and we could ill spare one of them, for writers who can combine consistent interest with a high moral tone are not on the increase. Parents owe a debt of gratitude to the author whose works they can place, with implicit trust, in their children's hands without first examining every page.

There are three pretty books before me now, all published by Messrs. Macmillan and Co. Two of these, *The Carved Lions* and *Sheila's Mystery*, both published at half-a-crown, are stories for girls, and have one point in common, that the heroine of each is of the wilful, odd-tempered type, misunderstood by others, and strongly resenting the treatment which is merely the result of her own waywardness. The moral of the tales is to show the softening of these warped natures in the hard school of experience and the unveiling of the real loveliness which underlies the surface blemishes. The former volume takes its name from two carved lions which stand in the hall of a large furniture shop, and are vested in the children's minds with sentient qualities of a benevolent kind. These beasts hold a strong influence over the little folk's minds, and when the girl's unhappy experiences at school finally compel her to run away, it is back to their protective presence that she bends her steps. A long illness follows her escapade, through which the good-natured cabinet maker's wife and her little

grandchild tend her, and then the sun begins to shine through the childish clouds, with the return of her parents from India. It is a pretty story, although the interest may not be quite so strong as in *Sheila's Mystery*. Sheila has one of those ungovernable tempers which Thackeray pronounced to be the most useful of gifts, but, unfortunately, it has not the dominating effect that the great novelist attaches to it. She alienates one and all of the household from her, and after a little eavesdropping, finally mixes her identity with the little golden-haired sister by adoption. Thus bereft of parents, a burden to everyone, she wanders out into the world, is cared for by a kindly old gipsy fortune-teller, and works out her probation in the simple, hard life of a farm. The mystery is cleared up and she is restored to her father and mother, softened and chastened. Mrs. Molesworth's third story, *The Oriel Window* (3s. 6d.), appeals more to the boyish mind. It shows how Ferdy Ross, crippled for years by a fall from a pony, bears his suffering with a sweetness which endears all hearts to him, and by his influence moulds the rough character of a village lad, so that he gives forth the genius that is in him and becomes a notable wood carver. There are many pretty scenes in the book. All three volumes are well-illustrated.

An altogether charming book is, *Eric, Prince of Lorlonia*, by the Countess of Jersey (Macmillan and Co., 2s. 6d.). It is a blending of the days of chivalry with the license of a fairy story, the human interest of the former element giving it a probability which is quite convincing. There is not a dull page in the volume, the imagination of the author carrying one on from one hairbreadth adventure to another. There are some good fantastic descriptions, such as that of the Rose City, which hardly need the clever illustrations of Miss Alice Wood-

ward to bring the scenes before one. It is a story for all ages, and should rank high among the works of pure fancy.

From the same publishers comes a beautiful edition of Sheridan's two masterpieces, *The School for Scandal* and *The Rivals*. The cover is very handsome and the fifty full-page illustrations by E. J. Sullivan are all dainty works of art. Mr. Augustine Birrell gives a scholarly introduction to the plays. The price is six shillings.

Mrs. G. W. PAINE is another member of the Reading Union who has given some of her work the permanence of volume form. "A Sunset Idyll and other poems" (Hodder Brothers, 2s. 6d.) is a collection of verse



FROM ERIC, PRINCE OF LORLONIA.



FROM THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.

which will have more than the transient praise allotted to most of its kind. All the pieces are marked by deep earnestness, and frequently, as in some of the religious poems, rise to genuine inspiration. Perhaps the most noticeable portion of the book is the batch of sonnets with which it opens, that to Autumn

... "Throned on his corn-laden wains,
Bearing his treasures to the threshing floor,"

being particularly happy. In several instances Mrs. Paine has essayed the more difficult forms of verse, one of which, "Ballad on my Guardian Angel," we will select as the example for this month's poetical competition.

My Guardian Angel led me by
Strange, untrod paths, hard, dull and
drear :

When I would fain to pleasure hie
Stern duty was my charioteer.

An evil spirit lingered near,
Insidious, watchful, bitter foe !

When he would tempt with snare or lie,
My Guardian Angel whispered "No."

I found my angel guest a tie
When he my wayward steps would steer.
Alas ! I did for pleasure sigh,

At duty scoffed with ill-veiled sneer,
And chafed with wild repining tear ;

Toiled after pleasure to and fro :
Caught in her web (like some poor fly),
My Guardian Angel chided low.

Why did I turn from duty ? Why ?
For pleasure now is faded ere.

When I with sin and follow vie,
My Angel guest will disappear.

My Guardian, Conscience, sleeps, I fear
My heart with hope no more shall glow.
Good Angels, weeping, pitying cry ;
"Thus must you reap — reap as you sow."

ÉPIQUE.

My heart is hard, my tears are dry ;
I no more hear ; I no more know
My Angel. I let Conscience die
By sinful pleasures long ago.

THE merry season of Christmas is now drawing near, and, naturally, comes up the question of sending cards and greetings to friends. Messrs. Raphael Tuck and Sons have provided some most charming specimens in cards this year, their platino-panels being particularly beautiful, most artistic, and very graceful in design. They have some artistic portfolios, in mezzo-tint, of pictures by Fred Hines, and some in photogravure, of four masterpieces after Sir Thomas Lawrence and Sir Joshua Reynolds. Their calendars are novel and pretty in design, the most pleasing being a set of etchings after Turner, and their coloured and floral cards of many varieties are very chaste and pretty. They have also some very tasteful books for children.

Of a different type, but equally attractive are the cards and calendars of Messrs. Marcus Ward and Co. These are more in the new and quaint style one sees so much of now in illustrations. They have a large number of different varieties in calendars, perhaps the best being those with a photograph for each day, of a member of the Royal family; those with portraits of poets and poetesses, and those with portraits of popular singers. They have some charming specimens of greetings in book form, and many varieties of cards, dainty groups of children, and amusing incidents in animal life, and many others in old English style.

The same publishers also have some delightful birthday books in crimson and gold. *The Don Quixote* (1s. 6d.), and *Forget-Me-Nots* (5s.). The quotations are most happy and the production altogether artistic. *Pansies for Thoughts* (2s. 6d.) is another ideal gift book, with many delicate examples in colour of this favourite flower, and a bouquet of poems from our great bards.

ATLANTA DEBATING CLUB.

"ARE ARTIFICIAL AIDS TO BEAUTY PERMISSIBLE?"

THE writer who says that it is a woman's duty to be beautiful, is, after all, not far wrong. Towards the accomplishment of this "duty"—often, alas! difficult enough—it were surely churlish to refuse such poor aids as can be obtained; for, consider how little they can achieve, and for how short a time! "Heaven helps those who help themselves," says the old proverb, and should we not, to the best of our ability "help ourselves" to aid and complete the work which seems to need just a few more touches? It is certainly far better to do so than to rail at Dame Nature for her frowning face, or at Fortune for her fickle favour; better even than to bear the constant burden of blemishes and defects. Why should we not gratify the desire—and, after all, the very natural and gracious desire of every woman to make herself, if haply, not so made, "a thing of beauty," with its corollary, "a joy for ever"? To be beautiful is certainly one step towards gaining and retaining love; it adds an immense pleasure to companionship, and is a source of delight to all beholders. What wonder then that all should covet and strive to gain so great a gift, that it may be used, not selfishly, but to gladden all with whom we may be brought in contact. Virtue is good anywhere, but, as Sir Francis Bacon said long ago, even "Virtue is best in a body that is comely." MARY WADE EARP.

ARTIFICIAL aids to beauty may be divided into two classes. First, Those that aid in making the most of Nature's charms; second, Those that endeavour to supply Nature's deficiencies. We can scarcely denounce all artificial aids to beauty, for if we do we must eschew such every-day necessities as brushes and combs, even hair pins. But to wear one's hair in a

tousled mass over ears, eyes and shoulders, is contrary to that especial duty of woman—of the orderly housewife and the cheerful mother—of making the best of herself. We know we ought to value any mental gifts God has given us; surely, therefore, we ought also to value any outward charms we may be given. Many people wax eloquent over the duty of admiring and preserving the beauties of inanimate nature, yet they seem to forget that God's greatest work is man, and our first duty to, in every way, make the best of ourselves. Therefore, use all available aids to beauty, but be sure you first know what beauty is. True beauty can never be attained by shams; if health will not bring it, nothing will. If it is once realised that Nature is beautiful, the aids that have been placed in the second class will be discarded. All artificial aids to beauty are permissible, remembering that Nature is beautiful. Let Art be the handmaid, but never let her supersede Nature.

RUTH CROSSE.

No; artificial aids to beauty are not permissible. It is a quite natural feeling, and to be found in nearly every person, to present one's self in the best possible way, showing one's best sides. These sentiments are quite pardonable, especially in women, but only as long as no subtle and refined means are used. Because everything that is done to give, through external artifices, the appearance of what does not exist in reality is untruth. So let us be true, and let us act openly in this as well as in every other case. If Nature treated us parsimoniously in the way of exterior beauty, perhaps this lack is balanced by other gifts, gifts of interior beauty; talents that are still to be discovered and cultivated. The research and development of those gifts will be far more a benefit for us than the seeking and working for the difficult though false art of producing artificial beauty. Those to whom real beauty has been given must think of the responsibility that they receive at the same time. Let them be reminded to employ the power of beauty only to good and noble causes, and not to abuse its influence as means of tyrannising beauty's worshippers. In the same time they must consider that beauty will not last long, and that sooner or later it must decay, like everything of this world. But instead of using artificial means to conserve this beauty that is condemned to pass away, they ought to use all their powers to cultivate the other flower of interior beauty, that, though in this world, is not of the world, and will not pass away with this world. GABRIELLE DE BORRE.

ALTHOUGH at first we are inclined to believe that it is not only permissible, but even laudable, to have recourse to art, in order to enhance (or create) beauty of face and form, on further consideration of the question we must come to the conclusion that such things as artificial aids to beauty are quite incompatible with truly virtuous conduct. In the first place, such a practice is decidedly dishonest. To accept admiration for tasteful attire, and to accept it for a "natural" beauty, created by art, are two very different things, and in the latter case we are acting dishonestly and deceiving our fellow creatures—provided we do deceive them, for art in nature is a very easy thing to detect, and when detected, ridicule is its well merited punishment, so that it is simply a choice between two evils—ridiculousness and deceit. Another fault such conduct entails is vanity, and a great amount of it; and surely it is almost a crime to be continually thinking about our personal appearance. How much better it must be to gain respect and liking for what we truly are, than to receive admiration for charms which we do not in reality possess, knowing all the time that if people found out the truth they would turn from us with disgust and contempt, because the deceit practised upon them.

F. E. SANT.

ATALANTA CLUB.

Subject for December: "Is cycling a legitimate pastime for women?" Papers must not exceed more than *two hundred and fifty words*, and must be sent in on or before December 20th. Prizes of five shillings will be awarded to each of the four best papers, which will be published in the body of the Magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

Describe the imaginary experiences of a presentation at Court. Give a critical estimate of the character of James II. Write an original ballad (example given on page 206). Essays must not exceed 500 words. All papers must be sent in on or before December 20th. Members may only enter for one of these subjects. Subject for the School of Journalism will be found on page 191. Full rules for the above will be found among the advertising pages at the end of this number.

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (NOVEMBER).

I.

1. Three celebrated Scottish beauties (Campbell).
2. It is a whirlpool on the western coast of Scotland, near the Island of Jura, and is heard at a prodigious distance. Its name signifies the whirlpool of the Prince of Denmark, and the legend goes that a Danish Prince undertook to cast anchor in it, but perished in the attempt.

II.

1. The customary salutation in Scandinavia, when drinking a health.
2. It was written in Latin, by Jacobus de Voragine, a Dominican friar of the 13th century, who afterwards became Archbishop of Genoa, and died 1292.

III.

1. "*Mynen naem is Roland; als ikklep is er brand, and als ik luy is er victorie in het land.*" "My name is Roland; when I toll there is fire, and when I ring there is victory in the land."
2. Philippe de Bougoyne, surnamed Le Bon.
3. On the occasion of his marriage with Isabella of Portugal, January 10th, 1439.

IV.

1. Oliver Basselin, who flourished in the 15th century, gave to his convivial songs the name of his native valleys, Vaux-de-Vire. This was corrupted into the modern *vaudeville*.
2. Tremendous torrents of melting snow, that tumble from the tops of the Alps and deluge all the country before them.

V.

1. "A voyage round the world" (Montgomery).
2. From Moore's Epistles and Odes.
3. "To Winter" (Byron).

VI.

1. Riga, who perished in the attempt to revolutionise Greece.
2. Byron.
3. The Princess Charlotte.
4. Byron.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR DECEMBER.

I.

1. Where did the famous poem, "The Song of the Shirt," first appear?
2. Whose grave bears the inscription "Here lies one whose name was writ in water"?
3. Where is the grave?

II.

1. Explain what is meant by the line "Were't my neck-verse at Harribee"?
2. What is a *Pentacle*?

III.

Give authors of these quotations

1. "What is Love? an idle passion,
Sage advisers call it so;
Can I treat it in their fashion?
Honest Nature answers, no."
2. "Tell me, thou soul of her I love,
Ah! tell me whither art thou fled;
To what delightful world above,
Appointed for the happy dead?"

IV.

1. Who wrote the silly but famous song of "Lillibulero?"
2. What is the "cap of maintenance"?

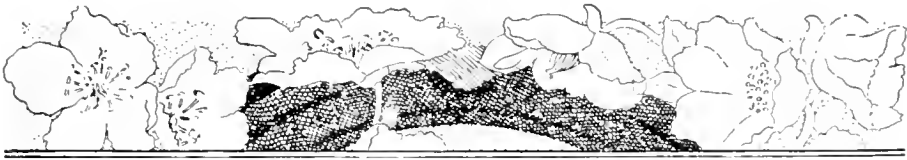
V.

1. Where is the original idea of the ballad "Alice Brand" to be found?
2. What is the legend of "Erick's Cap"?
3. What were "bonnet-pieces"?

VI.

Give authors to these quotations—

1. "The leaves have not yet gone; then why do ye come,
O white flakes falling from a dusky cloud?"
2. "The dead abide with us! though stark and cold
Earth seems to grip them, they are with us still."
3. "When I shall die—and be it late or soon—
Let merciful memories be my only shroud,
Think me a light veiled in a morning cloud."
4. "Sleep, thou art named eternal! Is there then
No chance of waking in thy noiseless realm?"



New Year's Ode.

I.

Now the midnight chimes tell the old year is ending ;
Dimly are the dark trees discerned against the snow,
Low in the western sky, the slender moon is bending
Her silver bow.

II.

Soon through the dead leaves, the snowdrops will come
thronging
Greyish green and white, like flakes of frozen foam ;
Soon will my blackbirds pipe their songs of love and longing
Building their home

III.

Then dawn May and June, with their carnival of
flowers,
Lilac, and laburnum, and the rosy-hearted
may ;
O'er the sunny meadows falls the apple
bloom in showers
When breezes play

IV.

Autumn comes apace with its soft wild wet west wind ;
Through the misty pastures glow the trees in red and gold ;
Till the winter sunsets show their skeletons denuded,
Black, bare, and cold.

V.

Like the year, our life goes but yet we must remember
(Through the summer twilights and the wistful autumn
rain),
When the old year's ended, and after death's December,
Spring comes again.

ALMA BROWNING.





MORDECAI AT THE GATE.

LITTLE MISS LUSTRING.

BY AGNES GIBERNE;
*Author of "Miss Devereux, Spinster,"
"The Girl at the Dowry House," etc.*

CHAPTER I.

HUGO'S ENGAGEMENT.

"THE sweetest little creature that ever lived!"

Hugo Auckland spoke in a deprecatory manner, as if not expecting to meet with assent. The old lady knitted steadily on, her pale fingers slightly tremulous. She had never once lifted her eyes to his during the telling of his tale. Now he waited for her to speak, and he waited in vain.

"You have not seen much of Rosina. When you have, you will feel differently."

"I have seen precisely as much of Miss Lustring as I have had the smallest wish to see. As much as I could ever wish in the future, if it were not that she is, as it seems, to become your wife. And—" with an intonation of biting scorn—"and *my* daughter-in-law!"

"Things will not look so to you by-and-by, mother." Mrs. Auckland had never permitted any of the modern equivalents for the beautiful old term "Mother," and Hugo was in all minor matters a submissive son. No man, close upon thirty, could, if not submissive, have lived peacefully with that inflexible old lady during the chief part of his life. When, however, he did make a stand, he could show a determination equal to her own.

"Probably ten years hence I shall know her as well as I do now; neither more nor less. If I take to people at all, I take to them early. My first impressions are not often wrong; and I have not taken to little Miss Lustring. I have counted her a spoilt child, with third-rate parents."

"Rosina cannot help her parents! She has been anything rather than spoilt. As forage,—she is young, but that will mend."

"I suppose you hardly expect to stand still yourself, while she grows older. A child of sixteen! Ridiculous!"

"Rosina is older than she looks. She will be twenty in three months. Barely ten years between us. And if we love one another——"

"If!" The bitter little monosyllable cut into his sentence with remorseless force. Auckland frowned, and the frown did not improve his appearance. He was tall, but clumsily made and markedly plain. While in years still young, his face and figure might very well have belonged to forty or forty-five years, and he knew this. He was constantly treated by strangers as if in middle life.

"I mean what I say. If we love one another, what do ten years signify? As Rosina says, they are nothing; and the difference will practically lessen as time goes on. Neither she nor her parents make anything of it."

"Trust them! They know better. You don't imagine that I am troubling myself with her side of the matter. Her's!" For the first time Mrs. Auckland laid down her knitting, and looked at Hugo. "It is you—you who are too good for her; not she who is too good for you. Her's! The little minx!"

He moved sharply.

"No fear but that she will be the gainer. My regrets are for you,—you whom till now I have counted to be a man of sound sense. That *you* should fling yourself away upon a mere infant, for the sake of a childish giggle and a pink and white baby face! Pah!"

"You are speaking of my promised wife!"

"I am telling you my frank opinion of the girl,—for the first and perhaps for the last time. If I had seen the danger sooner, I would have spoken sooner. Fool that I have been,—they warned me, and I laughed at the notion. It may not be too late even now."

"It is too late. I have spoken, and Rosina is mine. Nothing can change that. You

have it in your power to make me unhappy, but not to make me give her up." Then, in a gentler tone,—“Till to-day I have always been sure of your sympathy. Have you no kind word for me now, when I have gained the greatest wish of my life?”

Her harshly-outlined face grew softer, the throat-muscles worked, and two tears crept slowly from under the eyelids. “If it were for your happiness”—she murmured. “But I know better,”

“It *is* for my happiness. You will be good to her, mother. Rosina is prepared to love you. I have told her that you and Maud will live with us,—that my home must always be your home,—and she is willing. You will be very good to her, for my sake?”

“It will have to be for your sake. Decidedly not for her’s,” Mrs. Auckland said stubbornly, drying her eyes.

People had often wondered why Hugo Auckland never seemed to think of marrying. True, his mother and sister were devoted to him and he was to them; but love for a mother and sister seldom prevents a man from seeking a wife. True also, he was unattractive outwardly; but the plainest men are sometimes the first to take to matrimony. Since Hugo’s growth into manhood he had been more or less of a mystery to the neighbourhood. He had good health and good abilities, and he might have carved out a career for himself; except for the fact that Mrs. Auckland had never been willing to part with him. Apparently Hugo reckoned this a sufficient reason, which some young men would not. “My mother cannot get on without me,” he would say in partial explanation, if the subject came up, but he never fully discussed the question with others. He had no stated occupation beyond looking after his own domain, which was not extensive enough to afford full scope for his energies; but happily for himself he was a born sportsman, and he hunted and shot with untiring vigour.

There were not wanting some who condemned in plain terms the selfishness of Mrs.

Auckland; and perhaps they were not far wrong. At times he must have felt his home dull, or so friends said; yet he seldom went away for any length of time. Mrs. Auckland had married late; consequently, while he was still under thirty she was over seventy and infirm for her years. Upon this one son she had ever poured an exacting and jealous affection.

The right thing would be for him to marry, acquaintances said; and a few of them were so good as to decide exactly the kind of wife who would make him happy. A girl of good family; fairly off as to looks; passably clever; with quiet tastes, unexceptionable relatives, and finished manners,—that would be the sort of thing. Three or four young ladies of the correct type had been obligingly placed in his path by benevolent friends, and Hugo had perversely declined to be fascinated by any of them. With some of his friends it had become an accepted fact that Auckland was not a marrying man.

Then, almost without warning, people were taken by surprise to find him, not gliding calmly into some well-considered attachment, but all at once “head over ears” in love, in a most unlooked-for quarter. No well-bred suitable young woman of three or four and twenty, such as might have been selected for him by a committee of his lady-friends, but little childish Rosina Lustring, “a mere baby,” as many besides Mrs. Auckland were ready to say,—a girl of no family, of no particular education, with no knowledge of life or society, with defective manners, and with not a penny of her own either “in possession or reversion.”

The Lustrings were new arrivals, and they had not been regarded with any great favour, as likely to prove an acquisition. People had called upon them reluctantly, and had not hastened to call again. It was said that they had sustained heavy losses; and the head of the house, formerly an Army doctor, was stated to have lost his occupation for some not very creditable reasons. He was even reputed to have an unfortunate love for the

gaming-table. At all events, he had come into the country to economise, buying a small house, which had happened to be for sale on exceptionally low terms; and under these circumstances the parents might not be sorry that their daughter should make a good match early. Except as to looks, Auckland would be reckoned a good match for any portionless girl.

Little Miss Lustring was certainly pretty, being slender and fair, with innocent china-blue eyes, rather too widely opened. She did not carry herself well, and her taste in dress was questionable. She had not even the indefinable charm which, whatever it may consist in, seldom fails to take a man captive. There was nothing of the kind, at least in the opinion of most lookers-on, about Rosina Lustring. Auckland's men-friends were almost, though not quite, as much at their wits' ends as his women-friends, to account for his having fallen a victim. A few jesting remarks had passed with respect to his odd fancy for taking up "those Lustrings;" and then, like a bomb, it had burst upon the neighbourhood that he actually contemplated marrying a little unformed chit of a girl, in age nineteen, in appearance barely sixteen.

Not that his mother's eyes were opened even then. She could be keen enough generally, but this was too inconceivable. Somebody ventured on a faint word of warning, and the suggestion was met by a haughty scorn which precluded any second attempt. "She will have to see for herself," people said; but she did not see,—until the day when her son walked in, and told her of his engagement.

Small doubt had been felt from the first that Miss Lustring would accept him. Although he might not be regarded as exactly a rich man among men of wealth, he owned a comfortable "country mansion," a good many dozen acres, and an assured income, more than sufficient for the wants and luxuries of any ordinary household. As for personal charms, he was a gentleman; and, as already intimated, not much beyond

this could be said. He was heavy in build, his features were rugged; and the top of his head had already grown bald. Though his face could light up, with kindness and also with appreciation of a joke, its usual expression was of a somewhat fixed gravity. Few who knew him well failed to like him; only the knowing well was essential to the liking. He had never been a favourite among strangers. When he made friends he kept them; but he did not make them quickly. Still, while nobody imagined that Miss Lustring would prove an exception to the general rule, or counted it possible that her infantile blue eyes should already have fathomed his true nature through its rather repellent crust, everybody asserted,—“She will have him.”

Hardly had Hugo disappeared from the drawing-room before his mother rang a hand-bell sharply, and sent for “Miss Auckland.” Three minutes later a young lady of about seven-and-twenty walked in. She was good-looking and ladylike, with a capable and effective air.

“Did you suspect this, Maud?” brusquely demanded that old lady, after imparting her news.

Maud's eyebrows stirred. “I have noticed that Hugo was rather inclined to admire little Miss Lustring.”

“You never told me so.”

“I did not suppose that his admiration meant much. Perhaps I would not let myself think that it did.” Maud was at all times slow to admit that her brother could make a mistake; and even now a word followed quickly on his behalf;—“She really is a pretty little thing,—in that style.”

“So is a two-and-sixpenny doll,—in that style. I never discovered before that I had a son lacking in sense. As plain as you please.” Mrs. Auckland's was no blind devotion. “As plain as you please; but I did give him credit for the compensation of good sense.”

“Hugo ought to be old enough by this time to know what is for his happiness.”

“You ought to be old enough, my dear, to

know what is *not* for his happiness!" Maud laughed; and nobody would have guessed from her manner, the weight of dismay which lay below. A vision had instantly flashed up of little Rosina Lustring as the mistress of the house, as Hugo's wife! and her whole soul recoiled from the picture. But she would not make matters worse by blaming Hugo to his mother. Mrs. Auckland knitted fast for three minutes, gazing upon that same mental view. Her face had grown haggard; and the curved end of her thin Roman nose was drawn to one side by hidden agitation. Yet her next words were uttered in a resigned tone, which hardly meant resignation.

"Well, —we shall have to get the girl over, I suppose, for necessary palavering."

This was very much what had to be done. Mrs. Auckland would have fought to any extent for her own way, so long as the least hope remained of gaining it. But she knew well this son of hers, knew exactly how far his submission reached, and could tell to a hair's breadth the line beyond which her control ended. She was too wise to enter upon a contest which would mean certain defeat for herself. There was that in Hugo's face and voice to-day which showed her the uselessness of protest. He had made his choice, and by that choice he would abide, —ay, though the world were in arms against him.

CHAPTER II.

THE FUTURE BRIDE AND MOTHER-IN-LAW.

A day having been fixed, and a very early one to satisfy the impatience of Hugo, Mrs. Lustring brought her daughter over, in a shabby pony-chaise, hired for the occasion. Her husband was, she explained, very much engaged; very much indeed. He was always such a busy man. Had she said less, the excuse might have looked more real. No doubt he *was* busy, as most people are who have nothing to do; also he objected to pony-chaises, as affording insufficient scope for lengthy lower limbs; also his wife had

greater confidence in her own powers than in his for a difficult undertaking. This of course she did not reveal; and on the whole she might have acted more wisely in sending her husband. Dr. Lustring, albeit somewhat seedy in dress and second-rate in manner, had at least mixed largely with gentlemen. He knew how to assume a gentlemanly air, and he was not incapable of making himself agreeable; while Mrs. Lustring was liked by nobody. She had a reputation for a sharp tongue in her own home, and for a self-assertive fussiness everywhere else; while the fact that she had seen little of anything in the shape of good society was only too patent.

Mrs. Auckland really meant to do her best for Hugo's sake, and she would have acquitted herself well, notwithstanding her objection to the whole Lustring family; but the mother of Hugo's future wife was almost too much for her equanimity. While the elder lady was endeavouring in a stately manner to set her guests at their ease, without going an inch farther than might be counted an absolute necessity, and to express the requisite amount of welcome, without a shadow of genuine warmth, Mrs. Lustring, who had appeared in a miraculous new bonnet of cornerakes and daffodils, with yellow gloves to match the latter, kept breaking into her utterances, after a fashion which caused Mrs. Auckland's head to rein itself higher and higher.

Hugo had taken Rosina into the conservatory, and Maud sat near, divided between disgust and amusement. Disgust certainly predominated. Mrs. Lustring, like most self-sufficient persons, was not easily checked; and it was plain that she believed her gift to lie peculiarly in the sympathetic line. Perhaps few things are more exasperating, in a small way, than to be perpetually assured that one is entirely understood by an absolutely tactless individual, who is always saying and doing the wrong thing. But of this Mrs. Lustring was blissfully unconscious, and she believed her-

self to be making a delightful impression upon her daughter's future mother-in-law. She sat, like a cat watching for a mouse, her head bent forward till the topmost corner of her eyes pointed straight at Mrs. Auckland's cap, ready to seize upon the minutest loophole for self-assertion.

"Yes, I quite understand. Yes, indeed. Rosina is a good girl, Mrs. Auckland; a very good girl. Though perhaps,"—with an irritating little laugh, followed by a still more irritating little scrape—"though perhaps you'll think I'm hardly the person to say it. But if anybody knows, I ought. And she is a very good girl. And everybody knows what your son is, you know. Yes, indeed. There is only one opinion about him."

She was going too far. That Hugo should be metaphorically patted on the back by this effusive person, an absolute nobody in the neighbourhood, was more than his mother could patiently endure. She might blame her son, speaking in private to Maud, but none the less she worshipped him in her heart, counting that not another man in England was worthy to hold a candle to her Hugo. Praise from Mrs. Lustring was almost equivalent to an insult in her eyes. Every muscle in the brown old throat grew tense, like a piece of whipcord, and the faded delicate hands were clenched.

"I am really very much obliged!" Mrs. Auckland said slowly, and Maud knew what the tone meant, though Mrs. Lustring did not.

"O pray don't mention it. I assure you, everybody says the same. Not a man, woman, or child, but has a good word for your son." She would have liked to call him "Hugo," with an early assumption of intimacy, but something in the stern face restrained her. She smoothed her yellow gloves, with an agreeable consciousness of being well-dressed. "Yes, indeed. Rosina must be looked upon as quite a fortunate girl. I am sure her father and I couldn't feel happier about her than we do. Such a nice prospect in every way, isn't it? And then to

have her living so near too! Why, we can be always running in and out! It won't be anything of a parting. I thought you would just like me to tell you how delighted we are!"—in a congratulatory tone.

"Thanks!"—icily. "A matter may be seen from different sides, with different results. No doubt I ought to be gratified."

For three seconds Mrs. Lustring looked puzzled. Then her face cleared.

"Yes, indeed. I quite see that. O yes, I understand. Perfectly. It does make a great difference. People always say so, you know, about one's son or one's daughter marrying." The irritating little giggle recurred. "I've never had a son, so I can't speak from experience, but we all know the old saying, 'My son's my son till——' you know. I needn't finish it. But it isn't always true, of course. Not as to the son, I mean. I'm quite sure as to the daughter. My daughter will be my daughter all my life. But I can quite understand that with a son things do look just a little different."

"My son has always been to me——"

"Yes, indeed, I quite understand——"

"Has been to me——"

"Yes, indeed. O pray don't think for a moment that I meant——"

"My son has been——"

"I do assure you I can so fully enter into what you must feel. It is so natural, you know. That is just precisely what I should feel in your place. If I had a son, I mean, and if he were going to marry. About one's daughter, it is quite another thing. Yes indeed. I quite——"

"Perhaps you would kindly permit me to finish my sentence. My son has always been——"

"Has been, I am sure, all that a son could be. Yes, indeed; everybody says so." Mrs. Lustring was unaware that she had again interrupted the old lady. She was a life-long victim to the habit, and she did not hear her own rudeness. "Yes, indeed. And of course that makes it the harder for you to lose him. Not that you will lose him

really,—” another giggle and scrape. “But still there is generally some truth in those old sayings; don’t you think so? And I suppose one must hardly expect you to look upon this with quite unmixed pleasure, as we can do.”

“I do *not* look upon the engagement with unmixed pleasure, Mrs. Lustring.”

Mrs. Auckland would not have said so much, had she not been baited beyond endurance. The incisive utterance, emphatically spoken, made itself heard, and for a minute or so Mrs. Lustring seemed slightly subdued. Yet still she murmured mechanically, “I am sure I should feel the same in your place. I can enter into your feelings *so* well. I *fully* understand.”

Perhaps she had had about enough, for, to Maud’s relief, she soon rose and took her leave. Rosina was to remain some hours. As the door closed, Mrs. Auckland said in audible tones, “Thank Heaven that is over!” — and a kindred sentiment, differently worded, might have been heard from the pony-chaise, as Mrs. Lustring drove away. “What an awful old woman!” ejaculated the latter. “It’s a mercy I’ve escaped. Well, Rosina must just learn to hold her own, and not give in. That’s all. I’m thankful *I* shall not have much to do with the old thing.”

Perhaps the very disgust inspired by Rosina’s mother had something of an advantageous effect, causing Rosina herself to seem pleasanter by force of contrast. The month being June and the weather warm, she had made her appearance in white, and thus far she could hardly have done better; but the frock was too elaborate in make both for her age and for the occasion; she wore broad scarlet ribbons; her arms were laden with ponderous silver bangles; her flaxen hair was arranged in the utmost extreme of the current fashion; and the varied hues which met in her spreading hat would have been more gracefully combined by the hand of Nature in a rainbow. Despite these drawbacks she looked very fair, with the fresh prettiness of youth, and her eyes were

sweeter than their wont, from a touch of timidity which kept them from being too widely opened. Of her mother’s self-assertion there was in Rosina no trace. She seemed to be fond of Hugo, and perpetually turned upon him little appealing glances, as if enquiring what he wished her to do or to say next.

It became evident that Hugo at least was satisfied with the prize he had won. If her dress were not in very good taste, he managed to ignore the fact; if a slight lack of good-breeding were now and again apparent, he showed himself serenely oblivious of the same. Maud lifted her pencilled eyebrows, and shrugged her shapely shoulders, when nobody was looking. Hugo had hitherto been regarded as a man of critical tastes, more especially with respect to ladies; but even with the most critical of men love is apt for a while to produce blindness. “Only, how about after marriage?” Maud asked shrewdly of herself. “If he does not mind now, he will mind then.”

Perhaps it was well that Rosina had not yet developed powers of keen observation. In Mrs. Auckland’s bearing a tinge of veiled patronage might have been detected, but the girl failed to see it. She thought herself most kindly treated; and, for the moment, she wanted no more. “Your mother is such an old dear!” she was heard to say confidentially to Hugo; and though the remark was in questionable taste from one point of view, it might be looked upon as satisfactory from another point.

That evening, when his little *fiancée* had departed, Hugo repeated to Mrs. Auckland what she had said, consciously or unconsciously modifying the form of expression used. “Such an old dear!” became “Such a dear old lady!” which undoubtedly was a prudent alteration, though even this improved version gave no particular pleasure. The old lady in question drew her lips together.

“I ought to be exceedingly obliged,” she said. “Really, at my age and in my position,

It is something to be proud of, that I should have succeeded in winning the approval of little Miss Lustring. Certain people are very easily hoodwinked! My dear, your future wife will never succeed in setting the Thames on fire! She has just three ideas in her little pate."

Hugo unwisely begged to be told what those three ideas might be; and it is to be hoped that he did not look for a flattering reply. The answer came with cutting deliberation:—

"You really wish to know? I always say what I mean. Three words are enough. Dress!—Dress!—Dress!"

Auckland left the room hastily, without response. He had perhaps good reason to feel vexed.

But Mrs. Auckland was wrong, as people often are in hasty judgments. Other ideas reigned in Rosina's head, besides thoughts of dress.

CHAPTER III.

A FORMER SUITOR.

The Lustrings lived barely three miles away; and thenceforward, as was natural, intercourse between the two houses became a matter of constant occurrence. Hugo was a man of leisure, with horses at command; and he was over there perpetually. Maud hardly wondered at her mother's haggard look; she only wondered that Hugo failed to note it. All his life he had been everything to her; and now she was left outside.

Not that Hugo meant to be unkind. He fully believed himself to be as careful as ever of Mrs. Auckland's wishes; but he was seldom content for long together, unless he were with Rosina. No doubt he would have been happy, speaking freely about her. The old lady, however, declined conversation on that topic, and at present other subjects failed to enchain Hugo. For the first time, sympathy between mother and son was at a discount.

Since he had not her interest in the one matter which chiefly engrossed his thoughts, he turned the more to Maud. And Maud, while disliking his engagement from every point of view, no less than did Mrs. Auckland, would not check his confidence. She had been for many years lonely, though nobody guessed the fact, in a household where the mother and son had been all-in-all each to the other; and it gave her a curious pleasure to know that she could for once be of greater service to him than anyone else. She knew Hugo as not many people had a chance of knowing him; and the simple fact that his own sister did not look upon his face as plain goes far to show what the man was. Many even of his warmest friends never advanced beyond saying,—“A charming man, in spite of his ugliness!” But Maud never thought of him as ugly.

She did not take to Rosina, she heartily disliked the Lustrings as a family, and she had not the smallest wish to know them better. None the less, when Hugo entreated her to cultivate their acquaintance, for his sake, she at once fell in with his wishes, only making a wry face in private. Her most ardent hope was that something might yet intervene to prevent the marriage, that for some reason or other the engagement might yet be broken off; but this desire was kept under, and no one could have guessed it from her manner. She went to call on the Lustrings as often as her brother wished, and very soon she found herself on terms of growing friendliness—friendship would be too strong a word—with the family. Rosina she tolerated, the rest she strongly objected to; yet somehow she won Mrs. Lustring's confidence, and was treated to many an outpouring by that excitable lady.

“One never does feel quite sure what a girl really feels,” the latter observed one day, with nervously-tilted eyebrows, finding herself alone with Maud. “And of course one wouldn't like to make a mistake. But really Rosina does look so very happy, and she is always so delighted when Hugo comes to

the house, you know. He is always coming. And she was quite ready to accept him, when he asked her. So what could I do? Of course there is a difference in their ages, but then it is a difference all on the right side. People may say that she is marrying him for his money. Poor dear child!" Mrs. Lustring paused to allow time for the denial which failed to come. Maud merely listened. "There *is* such an amount of unkindness in the world. People *will* ascribe such motives to everybody, you know. So cruel, isn't it? But you and I know better. I do assure you, it is quite a genuine love-affair. Quite genuine!"

"I should imagine that —"

"Ah, yes, that is exactly what *I* say. I was so sure you would feel the same. And I said to Rosina over and over again that day. — 'Now, my dear Rosina, do think the matter well over, and don't be in a hurry.' And when she asked my advice, I just said how delightful it would be to have her so near to us, and all that. And I said too, 'I wouldn't have you sacrifice yourself on any account.' I just said that, and a good deal more besides. One has to be so very careful in giving advice at such times. Don't you think so? But that was the best plan, was it not?"

"I really could not venture to say. People generally —"

"Yes, indeed, I quite understand. That is exactly what *I* feel. If one gives advice at all, it seems almost like sort of interfering, you know. And so I had to be very careful. But of course there *are* times," with a giggle "when one ought to advise. You see this isn't Rosina's first. She *might* have been married by now." Another giggle. "O yes, there was another young man, really a most delightful young fellow. So handsome and pleasant; but he hadn't a penny of his own, except his salary. He was only a clerk in a Bank; and nobody could guess that he was soon to come in for quite a fortune."

"How interesting!"

"Yes, indeed. Quite like a story-book,

wasn't it? The money came to him just six months afterwards,—and if one had known, —but of course nobody could possibly know. And in that case I really felt bound to give advice. As I said to Rosina, people can't live upon dry bread, not even with the best intentions; and sixty pounds a year wouldn't mean much more than dry bread. He had just sixty pounds a year; and now I suppose he has something like four thousand pounds. Extraordinary change for a young man, isn't it?"

"I wonder that he did not come forward a second time. That would have seemed the natural thing to do," Maud remarked calmly.

"That was what I—at least, my husband—at least he never—I suppose the fact was that he knew Rosina did not care for him." This came as a happy after-thought. "No, we have not seen him yet, since then,—since his money came to him, I mean. At least, only my husband has seen him. One never can tell with young men. They are so uncertain. It is quite different with an older man, like your brother. Though of course he is not so old as he looks; but he *looks* any age. And that makes one feel a sort of confidence in him, don't you see?"

And this was to be Hugo's mother-in-law!

As to Rosina herself, Maud could by this time have confessed to a touch of something like affection. She had been growing almost fond of the little soft pretty thing, with her rattling bangles, her over-smart style of dress, her elaborate fair hair. Though no great force of character might lie below, the girl was evidently a good girl, anxious to do right, and bent upon pleasing Hugo.

"He is ~~such~~ a clever man," she would murmur confidentially in her turn to Maud. "Don't you think he is awfully clever? I wish I were clever too. You know I'm really very stupid. I never could pass properly any of my school exams., and I never got a single prize, and I always forgot everything I learnt. Will Hugo mind, do you think? I hope he won't. He is a perfect dear! He gave me a lovely brooch only this morning."

It did not sound brilliant. Maud had to admit to herself that Mrs. Auckland's measure of the girl's capacity was not very far wrong, so far as intellect went. She had her charms; small straight features, dainty of nothing more; a pink and white skin; and eyes of cerulean tint, expressing perhaps more than actually lay in their rear. Many a sensible man has fallen in love, with less to account for it. But—would Hugo be the man to do so? Had Maud been asked this question a few weeks earlier, she would have answered with an uncompromising "No." He had always been in her eyes the embodiment of masculine wisdom. Now she was less sure.

Hugo himself could to some extent have enlightened her. He could have assured his sister that what had taken him captive was not mere colour and form, but something underlying, something difficult to define, while yet he was clearly conscious of its existence.

He could have told her of a day, not far back, when he had come across little Rosina Lustring, with a grieved face, tear-stained like that of a child, and had drawn from her the cause. She did not tell him all her trouble, because that must have meant blame of another; but she confessed to having been betrayed into sharp words, which had made somebody sad. "And I am so sorry," she had said, lifting innocent eyes to his,—"so very, very sorry. I do hate to make people unhappy. As if there wasn't trouble enough in the world already!" Then drawn on by his sympathy, she had continued,—“I'm not clever, you know; not in the very least; and I never shall be; but I do want to be a comfort to people. I wonder if I shall be able.” And Hugo had quoted certain hackneyed lines,—

“Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever;
Do noble things, not dream them, all day long;”—

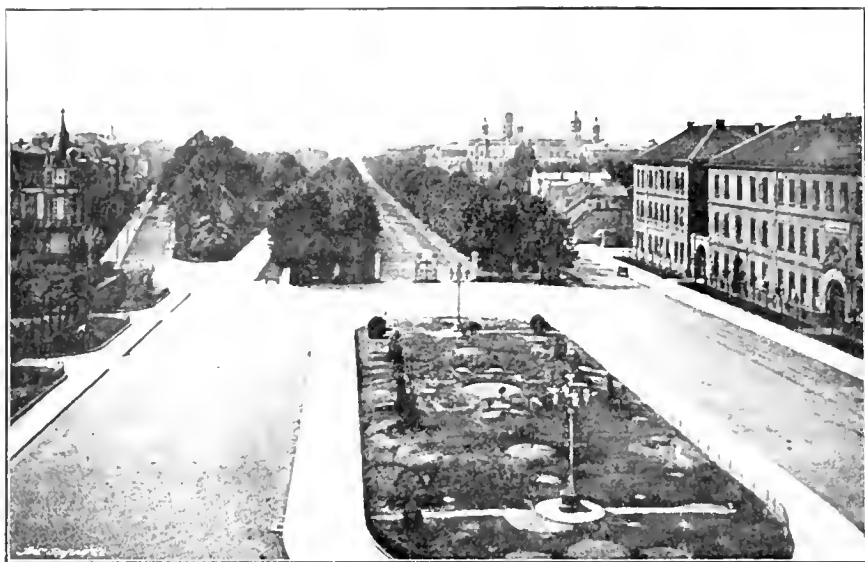
which did not sound hackneyed to Rosina, because she had never come across them before in the very limited range of her reading; and also because Hugo's look was so full of kind interest that it quite won her little heart.

In this brief scene lay the clue to what Mrs. Auckland called “her son's infatuation;” a clue which Hugo might have supplied, though he did not. For that which had laid its grip upon him was neither more nor less than the power of simple goodness,—the power of an earnest wish to do right and to be kind to everybody, which underlay that flaxen head, with its small intellectuality and its lack of wit. Adventitious aids were few; and Maud was right in supposing that Hugo would not have fallen in love with blue eyes and a white skin *only*! That which lay beneath had mastered him. Like many a strong man, he was susceptible in a marked degree to womanly gentleness and yieldingness; and he had found these in Rosina,—incipient and unformed as yet, but real. This it was that he loved in her; only he did not say so, because it would have seemed like a kind of desecration to analyse his feelings in words, because he looked upon that little past scene as confidential, and because also he had an instinct that he would not be understood.

If Hugo wanted brilliant parts in his future wife, he was doomed to disappointment; but if he only wished for a good and affectionate little companion, who would do her duty and would sincerely try to please him, then he had probably a fair prospect of happiness.

To Maud, not knowing all this, the happiness seemed extremely doubtful. Also an uncomfortable impression remained on her mind, as to the “delightful young man,” who had once asked Rosina to marry him, and whom she most likely would have married, but for the lack of suitable funds.

To be continued.



HERRENHAUSEN ALLEE.

HANOVER AND ITS MEMORIES.

BY LADY JEPHSON.

THE habit of travel has widely spread since the days when our forefathers started off from Calais in the family coach to do the grand tour. They travelled worthy gentlemen! in a dignified, leisurely, stately manner, befitting their personalities and their possessions. We, their degenerate successors, have thrown deportment to the winds. We have no time to cultivate the graces of dignity and serenity. In hot haste we scurry across continents, caring so little for the scenery about us that we bury ourselves in a "Tauchnitz" as we fly. Be they rivers, mountains, lakes, bridges, or factory chimneys that we pass, it is all one to us. Small wonder if we can travel in these days from Dan to Beersheba and cry, "'Tis all barren."

Formerly only the upper classes indulged in the luxury of a grand tour. Now-a-days the proletariat is seized with a desire to emulate his betters. In fact, everybody travels, and the difficulty is to find anything new

under the sun, or any spot free from tourists. Without pretending for a moment that the Capital of Hanover is a *terra incognita* to the British sight-seer, one can truly say that it has never been the happy hunting ground of tourists. Perhaps the chief reason for the blessed immunity it enjoys lies in the fact that its principal interest is historical. Now, a knowledge of history, though an indispensable fraction in the sum of profit and enjoyment to be gained by travel, is yet no allurements to the uneducated mind. Judging by what he has written of the Town, Thackeray must manifestly have been suffering from a severe attack of liver when fate and his impending lectures drove him to Hanover. What he looked at there, he looked at with evil-disposed eyes. The intangible charm of the place eluded him. He describes the statuary as "clumsy high Dutch," he writes irreverently and flippantly of the cooking, and worst outrage of all!—he calls the town of Hanover "that ugly cradle in which our Georges were nursed." Granting Thackeray his premises, acknowledging that Hanover never produced either a Michael Angelo or a Soyer, I, for one, stoutly

controvert his assertion that Hanover is ugly. How can a town be devoid of beauty which is blessed with a river winding picturesquely through it, which is surrounded with beautiful woods, and which can shew architecture such as the old Rath Haus. Moreover, for Englishmen Hanover ought to possess a special charm, since English Sovereigns have ruled over it from the accession of George I. to that of Queen Victoria. It was for sometime "bone of our bone"; when it ceased to be that, it yet could not fail of sentimental interest, just as cousins in the third and even fourth degree claim kinship, and appeal to our clannish instincts. We sent an English prince to sit on the throne of his ancestors. Englishmen took service in the Hanoverian army, often distinguished themselves, and (as in the case of General Halkett) were occasionally ennobled. Over the shop doors in Hanover at the present day he who runs may read many an English name, and although the Kingdom of Hanover is now a Prussian province, English memories hang about the old town still.

Modern Hanover, with its wide streets planted with trees, its palatial buildings, plate-glass windows, electric trams, tramways, and system of arc lighting, is as American as anything to be found on this continent. Prosperous, commercial, clean and commonplace, one cannot look to it for interest either historical or artistic. The Hanover of the Georges, however, teems with both, and the Markt Kirche, about which the quaintest houses are grouped, lies close to the Georg Strasse. Here the houses are gabled, with deep eaves under which project story after story. Where the beams support each projection they in turn are upheld by richly-carved corbels. Some

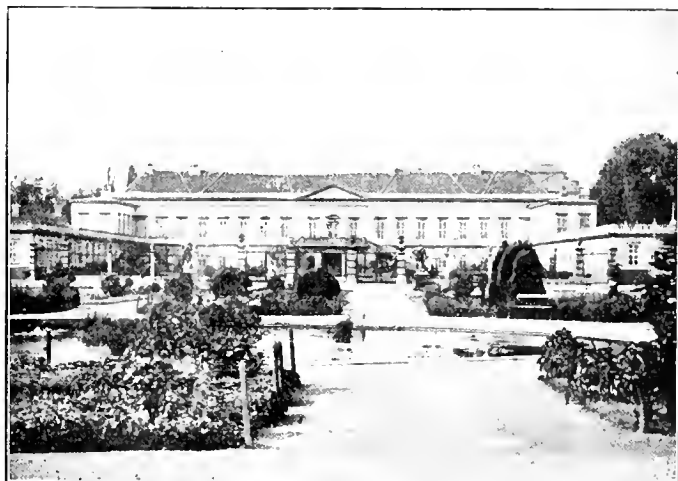
of the beams are elaborately sculptured and gilt, nearly all bear pious mottoes, breathing a spirit of faith and resignation to God's will. On one I read:—

"Deutsches Haus in Deutschem Land,
Schutze Gott mit starke Hand."*

The Knochenhauer Strasse and Schmiede Strasse are full of beautiful picturesque examples of late Gothic architecture. The steep pitched roofs are red tiled, the façades are generally covered, except where the beams occur, with stucco, and the woodwork is often painted, carved, and gilt.

Leibnitz's old stone house in the Schmiede Strasse, is a singularly beautiful Renaissance building. The oriel windows are rich in sculpture, and the bas-reliefs beneath the mullions are taken from Biblical subjects. Now-a-days, the Kunstgewerbe Museum finds its home beneath the roof that sheltered Leibnitz, and the galleries and beautiful entrance hall are filled with fine old wood carving, iron locks, metal-work, brass hanging lamps, Delft tiles and stoves, porcelain, lustre-ware, and tapestry. Leibnitz seems to have lived in the two front rooms of the

*** German house in German land,
God protect with a strong hand."



HERRENHAUSEN.

first floor. In the great oriel window which overlooks the street he died, and there his writing table, ink pot, and chair remain as he left them. In the bedroom are many old articles of furniture said to have belonged to him, but the *Empfang Zimmer* was not lined in Leibnitz's day with the blue and white tiles which now adorn it.

philosophy, and whose aims were in the highest degree intellectual. The desire of the flesh was not the only aim of a corrupt court. Sophia, the Electress of Hanover, was a woman of strong understanding and elevated tastes, and it was characteristic of her intelligence and love of sound literature that she should have been reading a volume of Leibnitz at the moment of her fatal seizure. Sophia died in 1714, and Leibnitz survived her two years.

Herrenhausen, the beloved home of George I. and his son, lies about a mile-and-a-quarter out of Hanover. The road to it is lined on either hand by double rows of magnificent lime trees, and close to the Schloss is the George's Park. Two-storied, solid and severe in architecture, Schloss Herrenhausen is anything but suggestive of fleshpots. The gardens, it is true, were laid out by Le Notre on the model of Versailles. Whether a similarity of horticulture in Georgian days with that of the French Court resulted in a resemblance as to morals, or the lack of them, I know not. At all events, the gardens look eminently harmless and innocent in this year of grace, 1896. As we saw them the hedges needed clipping, and seemed somewhat ragged and unkempt. The turf was exquisitely green and fine in quality, but was open to improvement from a garden roller. The flower beds were brilliant with blossom, and the air was deliciously laden with perfumes. Statuary and fountains

were liberally sprinkled in every direction: those same libelled statues so disparagingly compared by Thackeray with the "marbles of Versailles." "Fancy Herrenhausen water-works," writes the dear old cynic, "in place of those of Marly; spread the tables with Schweinskopf, Specksuppe, Leber Kuchen, and the like delicacies in place of French *cuisine*, and fancy Frau von Kielmansegge



DAS LEIBNITZHAUS.

Thackeray dwells much on the depravity of Hanoverian life in George I.'s day. We hear of Mesdames Kielmansegge and Schulenberg (christened in England, the "Maypole," and the "Elephant"), but he says nothing about the greatest thinker of his time, he who tried to reconcile theology and

dancing with Count Kammerjunker Quirini or singing French songs with the most awful German accent, imagine a coarse Versailles" —liver must have been at its worst that time! —"and we have a Hanover before us. . . ." "The gardens and pavilions of Herrenhausen," he goes on to say, "are scarce changed since the day when the stout old Electress, Sophia, fell down in her last walk there, preceding but by a few weeks to the tomb James II.'s daughter, whose death made way for the Brunswick Stuarts in England.

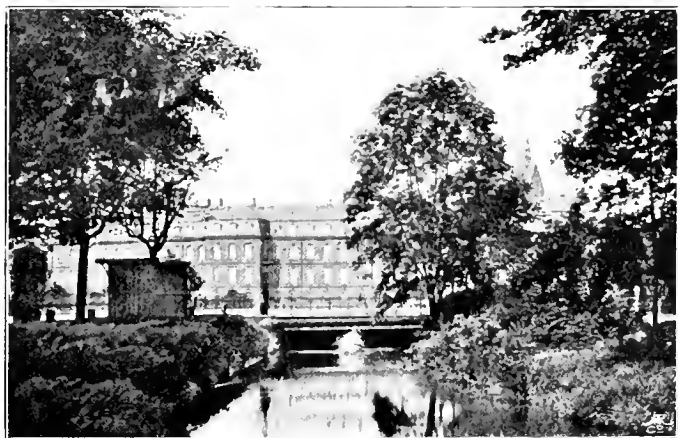
The Electress of Hanover is indeed one of the very few Royal people for whom Thackeray and the later historian of the Georges, Justin McCarthy, have nothing but praise. "One of the handsomest, the most cheerful, sensible, shrewd, accomplished of women," writes the former, and then he goes on to relate how the Duchess of Hanover, when asked of what religion her daughter, "then a pretty girl of thirteen," was, replied that "the Princess *was of no religion as yet!*" "They were waiting to know of what religion her husband would be, Protestant or Catholic, before instructing her!" Apparently Sophia's religious views as regards the Electress of Brandenburg were elastic, though for herself she clung to the Reformed Church.

At the end of a prim garden walk at Herrenhausen there is a sitting statue of Sophia sheltered from the rains and sun by a pavilion. It marks the spot where the fine old creature fell stricken in her last illness, and whence she was carried dying to the palace.

The Duke of Cumberland does not now-a-days allow people to go over his Schloss, having no love for Prussians, nor desire that they should tramp about under his roof. The fruit and flower gardens are kept up, and large consignments of fruit find their way from time to time

to Gmünden. The Hanoverians have great affection for, and touching loyalty towards, the family of their late Sovereign. In society, and amongst the *ancienne noblesse* of Hanover, the Prussian officers garrisoning the town are never met. The Emperor is none the less liked and respected, "are we not all Germans as well as Hanoverians," said a Hanoverian lady to me.

From the Herrenhausen Gardens it is an easy journey across the main road and through a beautiful wood to the Mausoleum. The approach is down an avenue of pollarded limes, and the Mausoleum contains the remains and the monuments of Ernest Augustus, King of Hanover, and his Queen, Frederica. Ernst August is better known in England as the Duke of Cumberland, uncle of Queen Victoria, and is not in any way to be confused with "the butcher," who was the son of George II. Queen Frederica was a Mecklenburg-Strelitz Princess and sister of the lovely Louise of Prussia, who, as all the world knows, was famous for her beauty, her nobility of character, and her misfortunes. Frederica had her own share of all three. As a young woman she must have been singularly lovely. Rauch's recumbent statue in the Mausoleum represents an exceedingly pretty woman, with delicately chiselled nose, short upper lip, and rounded



THE KÖNIGLICHE SCHLOSS.



BEGUINEN THURM AND RIVER LEINE.

chin. There are several charming portraits of the Queen, painted in early youth, in the Herrenhausen Gallery, and they bear witness to her beauty of colouring as well as perfection of outline. In later life, alas! the contour seems to have become over generously expansive, and the delicacy of colouring was conspicuously absent. Her portrait, painted in a crimson velvet gown, and hat somewhat too youthful for the plump middle-aged face under it, preached a more telling sermon on the fleeting nature of this world's gifts and vanities than ever did parson from pulpit. The text of the homily being, "All that's bright must fade," and the moral to be deduced from it, the fact that no woman should allow herself to be handed down to posterity as she appears in middle life after the bloom of youth has left her, and before the compensatory graces of white hair and resignation to the inevitable have come upon her. Queen Frederica was three times married, being first widowed in her teens after a year or so of marriage. She died of cancer in the throat, and in her later portraits wears a white linen bandage round her face to hide the marks of her

terrible disease. Ernst August survived his wife many years, and lived and died beloved and respected. His equestrian statue in the Bahn-Hof Platz bears in few words eloquent testimony to this:—

"Dem
Landesvater
sein
Treues Volk."

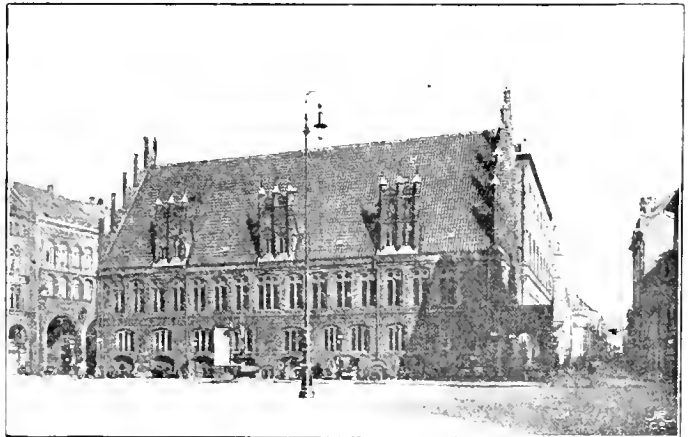
In the Welfen Museum, an out-lying building of the Schloss, we saw endless mementoes of the Hanoverian Royal family. The stuffed charger of Ernst August, the coronation robes of Ernst and his Queen (blue and white satin), a plum coloured silk robe which George IV. had worn, the wedding dress of Queen Frederica (white satin elaborately embroidered in gold thread), a kilt, sporran, and Highland jacket, worn by the Duke of Cumberland when a small boy, christening robes of the present ex-Royal Family, and countless portraits. The greater number of the pictures possessed small artistic merit, but were interesting as being portraits of the ancestors of our own Royal Family. I had never realised before how eminently handsome a man George III. had been in his youth. His plain little Queen

had so amiable and good a face that one readily forgave its sins of uncomeliness, as indeed did her Royal spouse, if history speaks truth when it records that at first sight of her he shuddered. If Queen Charlotte's features were irregular, and her form devoid of grace, she had none the less redeeming points. Her complexion seems to have been very fine, and her expression exceedingly pleasant, even winsome. Miss Burney's ill-natured picture of her character is not endorsed by contemporary authorities any more than borne out by her portraits. History does not say that George III.'s Queen was brilliantly capable and intelligent, like her predecessor on the throne, Queen Caroline, but no one has ever accused her of being stupid. The cleverest people are by no means the most delightful, and the best index we have to anyone's character is the verdict of his or her contemporaries. Charlotte was known as "the good": what praise could be greater? In later life it is satisfactory to know that the Queen's looks improved, or, as Horace Walpole termed it, "the bloom of her ugliness wore off."

And not only the legitimate loves of the Hanoverian line are to be found in the Welfen gallery, but those to which the Church gave no sanction. Countess von Platen smiles voluptuously upon us, as no doubt she did on the old Elector, and not at all as she did on poor Sophia Dorothea. Opposite to her hangs the Walmoden known in England as the Countess of Yar-mouth. Far more beautiful than anyone in the gallery, as she was immeasurably above the average in intellect, is the intelligent, tactful, devoted Queen, whose society misguided George II. was ever too ready to exchange for that of his Hanoverian charmers. Poor Sophia Dorothea, of Zell, appears

over and over again, always with very red cheeks and rather an unhappy expression. In an end room we came upon a beautiful miniature of our Queen in the bloom of youth and beauty. The face is oval and lovely, the hair smoothly parted and braided over each ear, the eyes clear, beautifully shaped, and sparkling with intelligence, the nose well cut, the mouth perfectly charming, and the throat long and white. I have never seen a more delightful portrait of the Queen, unless, perhaps, the picture which hangs at Drottningholm. On the whole, the Welfen Gallery is rich in interest for the student of history, although the art critic very likely would pool pool it.

The Königliche Schloss in the Lein Strasse is much the same as palaces are all over the world. It was built in the seventeenth century, and was lived in by the early Georges. There is the regulation courtyard in front, and the back looks over the Lein river to the gloomy Waterloo platz beyond. Eight hundred Hanoverians fell fighting with us at Waterloo, and the column which gives its name to the platz was erected to the memory of its heroes by a "grateful Fatherland." To return to the palace: there are endless suites of rooms, upholstered in brocade, quantities of gilt furniture, a superabundance of crystal chandeliers, and yards and yards of worthless pictures, the immense



ALTE RATHHAUS.

A CITY OF REFUGE.

scale of which seems to be in an inverse ratio to their merit. We were shown the reception-room of the Kaiserin on her visits to Hanover, and her *Schlaf Zimmer*, also the ball-rooms, and a fine *Speise Saal* and *Ritter Saal*. The suite of rooms devoted to the use of their Imperial Majesties is carefully preserved from dust and dirt by linen druggets stretched over the carpets, and by red chintz bags which envelop the curtains. The *Speise Saal* is effectively panelled in oak, picked out with gold, the pilasters which ornament the panels are much gilt, the ceiling coffered and painted green and gold, with marble medallions of cherub heads let in over the gilt chandeliers. The floors everywhere in the palace are exquisitely inlaid with rare and fine woods, and highly polished. One room had for design beneath our feet the familiar rose, thistle, and crown, and more than once we saw England's coat-of-arms in the Schloss. One wing is not shewn to visitors, being occupied by Prince Albrecht of Prussia, Regent of the Duchy of Brunswick.

Could the grim tragedy of Sophia Dorothea's life, we wondered, ever have come about in the snug commonplace prosperity of the *Königliche Schloss* as we saw it. An atmosphere more in unison with tragedies and grimness was to be found in the Royal Chapel, a painfully dreary, damp, dilapidated, over-decorated building. Below the chancel are the Royal burial vaults, where many of the family lie.

And so we seem to have followed the Hanoverian dynasty, from "their terraced gardens, their airy galleries, their triumphal chimney-pieces, their spacious stairways, their conscious provision for the elegant enjoyment of all seasons in turn," to the grisly tomb where lie buried ambitions and the end of sorrows and joys.

"If death were nothing, and naught after death,

It when men died at once they ceased to be,

Returning to the barren womb of nothing

Whence first they sprung, then might the debauchee,

Untrembling, mouth the heavens, then might the drunkard

Reel over his full bowl, and when 'tis drained,

Fill up another to the brim and laugh

At the poor bugbear Death."

Sight-seeing in Hanover, however, does not come to an end with palaces or royal chapels. There is still the beautiful old Rath Haus to admire, the Kestner Museum to see, the Eilenriede to explore, the Deer Park to visit, and coffee to be drunk at the forester's house. As one quits "the cradle," Ernest Augustus on his charger is our last sight, and the legend on the pedestal reminds us to the quickening of national pride how an English prince was beloved and esteemed in his German kingdom.

A CITY OF REFUGE.

EVER since the days of good King David of Scotland, the precincts of the Royal Palace of Holyrood have been called the Sanctuary. In the Middle Ages criminals of every kind clustered thickly in that handful of houses at the foot of the Canongate, secure from pursuit and capture, and the privilege remained long after the Abbey, which gave it birth, had disappeared. Even now, the old rights are not wholly extinct.

It was to this colony of outlaws and murderers that James Gillespie brought his little daughter, more than a century ago, hunted hither by the swift feet of Ruin. He was no criminal, only a kindly jovial man, to whom existence had been a continual feast of pleasure until the day of reckoning came; and the Abbey Laids—as the refugees were ironically styled—recognised his superiority, and called him the Laird, *par excellence*. He was proud of the title, although the little estate in Fife, round which his affections twined, had passed into the hands of strangers, and he was a landless, penniless man, in the prime of life.

Twelve years passed by. Jean Gillespie grew up to abhor the squalid surroundings of her childhood, and readily gave her heart and hand to a handsome English soldier, who came a-wooing in that den of thieves. They were married, and went away to the south country, and the Laird resented it bitterly; it was hard to see others entering on a life of love and freedom, which was denied to him for ever. Jean came back one day, when the regiment was ordered abroad, worn with illness and with a little child in her arms: a week later a funeral passed up the Canon-gate towards the Greyfriars Churchyard, while the Laird watched it out of sight with strained, tearful eyes. The debtor might not even bury his dead. From that day he cherished an implacable hatred against the man who had robbed him of his only child.

As time went on two over-mastering passions occupied James Gillespie's mind; side by side with thoughts of vengeance lived the hope of freedom. All day long, save when he was eking out a precarious livelihood by copying documents, he wrote letters on greasy sheets of paper; letters to the friends of his youth, pitiful supplications for help out of the slough, agonized entreaties written with the heart's blood. But no answer ever came. Twenty, thirty years, had passed since he fled to the City of Refuge; to the world outside he was as one dead.

On weekdays he never stirred from his miserable garret, although the whole range of the Queen's Park was open to him; but every Sunday, when the power of the law was in abeyance, he donned the ancient plum-coloured coat and threadbare beaver, and sauntered up the High Street, where he had been wont to ruffle it with the bravest in the days of long ago. Sometimes an old familiar face would start up among the passing throng, to be coldly averted at sight of the bankrupt; the friends and acquaintances of prosperous times passed by on the other side. And, at last, as the Laird's step grew feebler and his heart more sick, these Sabbath walks were relinquished altogether, under

pretence of a fear that the Sanctuary would not be regained before sunset.

"T'would be a great misfortune to be ta'en the noo by they Bailie loons!" he was wont to say, with forced cheerfulness, "when auld Drummeekit 'll be sendin' the siller the morn."

Amid such surroundings Grizel Mainwaring grew from a baby into a dark-haired slip of a girl, with wistful brown eyes. An old book-seller in the Canongate pitied the lonely lassie, and let her range among his dusty volumes, from which she gleaned a desultory education, and peopled the dusky streets and wynds with figures of the past. His wife taught her lace-making, and enabled her to keep the wolf from the door. At seventeen, Grizel was old in the experiences of struggling sordid misery, which young hearts should never know.

"Grandfather," she said, one autumn afternoon when an easterly ha'ar was wrapping the city in its folds of cold, white mist, "I'm awa' to the Grange wi' this broidered collar for my leddy. Ye'll no weary by yersel', will ye?"

The old man sat by the leaded casement, clad in a greasy dressing-gown which hung loosely on his shrunken shoulders. There was no powder on the ragged grey locks, once so trimly tied into a *queue*; his features, sharpened by suffering and privation, were of an ivory-yellow hue; the sunken eyes were unnaturally bright. He did not heed the wistful tone of the girl, who stood before him in her shabby cloak and hood, with that look of patient endurance on her young features which would have made a mother's heart ache, but looked up, with forced cheerfulness, to say:

"Bid fareweel to the gran' folk yonder, ma lassie, it's the last time ye'll dae their trokes. I'm just sendin' a word tae Jock Rutherford, tae mind him o' auld times, an' he'll be doon wi' the siller in—in a day or so!" In spite of the hopeful beginning the last words died sadly away.

The shadow deepened on Grizel's face, but

the sorrow at her heart lay too heavy even for tears. Silently she kissed the old man, and, drawing the hood around her face to avoid the insults which some were only too ready to offer to a defenceless girl, went out into the raw, damp air of the street.

The Laird wrote long and feverishly; but when the packet was sealed, and dispatched by a ragged messenger, a sort of despair crept over him. So many of those pitiful appeals had been all in vain. Would this last effort share the same fate? The old man bowed his head upon his hands, and sobbed aloud with the sickness of hope deferred.

A step creaked upon the rickety stair, and he started up as a visitor unceremoniously entered. A red-whiskered man, with oily voice and expression, the insolent triumph of power over weakness written in his cunning eye in short, Bailie Meiklejohn, clothier in the High Street in Edinburgh.

He surveyed the miserable room with unconcealed disgust, and, ignoring the chair which his host pushed forward with trembling fingers, proceeded at once to business.

"*Maister Gillespie*," with scornful emphasis. "A word wi' ye! D'ye ken these bit papers?" He unfolded a packet of greasy documents, and held them up before the old man's eyes.

No need to ask. The haggard face flushed crimson at the sight of the fatal bills which had wrought his ruin. He snatched at them in a sudden frenzy.

"Aye, aye," said the Bailie, soothingly, as he warded off the attack and replaced his papers in safety. "Dinna fash yersel, Laird! They're a' here the noo, though it's ta'en a while to seek them oot. Aweel," with maddening deliberation of speech, "ye'd like to hae them yersel, I'm thinkin', an' I'll no say na to that; but ye maun pay for them, ye ken."

There was a strange, hard glitter in the Laird's eyes. His dry lips formed the words, "I hae nae siller."

"I ken that weel," contemptuously. "It's

no yer siller I'm wantin', man; but ——" He laid a fat, greasy forefinger on the Laird's arm, and beat time to the measured words, "Gin ye gie me bonny Mistress Grizel, ye'll be free to gang yer ain gait in a week's time. Dinna glower at me that way, it's no canny. I'll just leave ye to think o't, an' ye can gie me yer decession the morn. Gude day to ye."

Long after the sound of heavy footsteps had died away the Laird stood like one petrified, the voice of the tempter still sounding in his ears. All at once there was a firm, short knock at the door, and a man, wrapped in a soldier's cloak, stepped over the threshold. The feeble light which crept through the leaded casement showed a scarred, sunburnt face, yet handsome withal; and, in spite of the lapse of eighteen years, the Laird recognised the features of his daughter's husband, the English soldier against whom he had vowed a bitter vengeance. The smouldering wrath of years broke out into flame.

"Awa' wi' ye, ye scoondrel!" he cried, in a voice that quavered with passion; "ye fause loon, that took my lassie awa' like a thief, an' then sent her back to dee! Awa' wi' ye!"

"Is Jeannie dead?" said the stranger, a spasm crossing his quiet, grave face. "I've been in a French prison these fifteen years, and many a time I've thought of this home-coming — and now she has gone before me."

He did not resent his hard reception; compassion for the lonely, decrepit old man swallowed up all petty irritation. His eyes wandered round the miserable garret.

"Where is my child?" he cried suddenly. "She must be a woman grown now."

There was a moment's pause. The events of that day had stirred into activity the Laird's sluggish faculties. To give Grizel up to her father would be to relinquish for ever his only hope of freedom — and yet ——. The old man's back was to the light, and his son-in-law saw nothing of the struggle that was raging within.

"Where is she?" he repeated, impatiently.

"Good and evil were fighting for the Laird's soul, and at last the evil conquered.

"She's deed, five year syne!" he moaned, and sank nervelessly into his chair. In vain the bereaved man, with white rigid face, tried to extract some details from the prostrate figure. The Laird only groaned feebly, and shook his head, till at last the soldier went away, with the words, "I'm staying at Mrs. Mason's, in Candle-makers' Row."

Every incident of the last hour was engraved indelibly on the Laird's brain. Over and over again he repeated the Bailie's words, until he fully realised their joyful meaning. Free! he would be free next week! The sudden joy intoxicated him; he laughed aloud, and wept, and sang snatches of Jacobite ballads in a weak thin treble.

Thus Grizel found him, when she came in with passionate words of entreaty and defiance on her white lips. For she had met Bailie Meiklejohn, exulting over certain victory, and he had told her all. She loathed the hard, evil-natured man who had persecuted her constantly for a year past; every feeling revolted against the infamous bargain—until she heard the old man's joyful cry—"Grizel, ma bairn! We'll be oot and awa' in a week's time! Isna that gran news, eh, lassie?"

How could she shatter his dream of hope, when the tardy happiness she had so often longed to bestow lay in her power? Silently, Grizel's resolution was taken. Next day she told the Bailie, with proud disdain, that she would marry him when he pleased; and, as his pleasure was to consummate the bargain as soon as possible, it was settled that the wedding should be in eight days.

All too swiftly that week of freedom sped past for the unhappy bride; to her grandfather it seemed to crawl on leaden feet. The last day came, and Grizel slipped away to the Greyfriars Churchyard to pour out her heavy heart at her mother's grave. The Laird's hilarious excitement jarred painfully upon her overwrought nerves.

The old man was in the midst of a

rapturous soliloquy, when the bridegroom entered, ill-pleased to find that his captive had escaped from the ostentatious display of wealth which he delighted to shower upon her. He determined to put an end at once to a slight misunderstanding on the Laird's part, and asked sneeringly—

"Aweel, Laird, an' whaur 'll ye be gangin' the morn? Yer auld freens 'll maybe no be ready to receive ye?"

The joyous light died out of the other's face. "I thought, I thought," he stammered.

"Ye thought ye wad jist tak' up hoose wi' me an Grizel," said the pitiless Bailie, "but that's no *my* opeenion. I'll hae nae auld feckless bodies stravagin' about ma hoose. Ye maun find a hame for yersel."

The brutal words tore away the veil from the Laird's eyes. He saw himself alone and friendless, a poor feeble old man, adrift in this city of strangers. Free! What an empty mockery that dearly-bought liberty would be, without a home, without his bonny Grizel! A great wave of wrath surged up in his heart towards the man who had entrapped him, and broke over the Bailie's devoted head in a torrent of abuse and recrimination, which made him slink away in abject terror.

"There's ae secondrel we're quit o'!" said the Laird with a grim smile, as he wiped the perspiration off his brow.

Then he began to think, and with memory came remorse, and gnawed at his heart. From the dusky corners of the attic, accusing spectres started up to torment him; the white, stricken face of his son-in-law, and Grizel, with her look of stony despair. The blackness of his guilt overwhelmed him with horror.

"I am living at Mrs. Mason's in Candle-maker Row," clear and distinct the soldier's words sounded in his ear. He would seek him out at once, and try to right the wrong.

The old man wrapped himself in his cloak, and went out, through the quiet Sanctuary and across the strand of safety into the Canon-gate. For thirty years he had not crossed the boundary-line, save on the day of rest.

The bailiffs had ceased to watch for him long ago, and no one recognized the bent figure as it toiled wearily up the street. It was a long time before Candlemaker Row was reached, only to find that the Captain was out; but the kindly landlady called him back as he turned away in the bitterness of despair.

"Sit ye down here, an' bide a wee, for ye're sair forfoughten. He'll soon be ben."

The room was small and stuffy, and the Laird drew his chair close to the casement for a breath of cooler air. The house was built upon the wall of a little, crowded graveyard, and there, among the memorials of the dead, he saw two figures in earnest consultation, and knew that his sin had found him out. A few minutes earlier Grizel was roused from her bitter weeping by a pleasant English voice, and saw a stranger at her side.

"Can you tell me," he asked, "where is the grave of Mistress Jean Mainwaring? I have sought it in vain."

Her heart throbbed quickly, as she gazed into the grave, sad face, so that she could hardly speak.

"It is here!" she gasped, and pointed to the grassy turf at their feet, where no headstone marked the resting-place of the debtor's daughter.

The soldier's heart was strangely stirred. It was the copy of his own features that he saw, though he knew it not; but she, with a woman's instinct, divined the truth.

"I am Grizel!" she cried, "oh father, father!" The soldier caught her in his arms and soothed her sobs.

"Your grandfather told me you were dead!" he said, bewildered.

Grizel gave an exceeding bitter cry. This was the hardest blow of all, that the old man for whom she was ready to sacrifice her life should have deceived her thus. In burning eager words she told her father all, but, when his indignation blazed forth, love and pity overcame her wrath.

"He has been very good to me," she pleaded, "and his life is so sad and lonely!

Dear father, forgive him for my sake. Let us go to him now!"

Together they left the sad little graveyard, and went out into the street. They did not see the wild haggard face at Luckie Morrison's window, nor hear the hoarse cry that broke from the Laird's lips as he turned away and tottered down the stairs.

Mechanically, he turned in the once familiar direction, with no attempt at disguise or concealment; the need for caution was utterly forgotten. Bailie Meiklejohn, nursing the seeds of vengeance at his shop-door, saw his enemy pass, with halting gait, and raised the hue and cry.

The Laird looked round and realised his danger. The old instinct of self-preservation lent wings to his feet and vigour to his feeble frame. Down the High Street he sped, a strange figure enough in his old-fashioned dress, with white hair streaming in the wind—on, on, till the Canongate was reached, and the Bailie puffed and panted far behind. There was a mist before the eyes of the fugitive; he did not see Grizel and her father, as he passed them in his headlong flight; the girl's cry of horror fell unheeded on his ear. He heard only the shouts of the pursuers, saw only that City of Refuge down at the palace gates.

It was close at hand now, but his strength was failing. Nearer and nearer drew the hunters, slower and more unsteady grew the pace of the prey. The Bailie reached forth his hands exultingly to grasp his victim, but, the next minute, Captain Mainwaring's strong arm had hurled him to the ground, while Grizel guided the staggering footsteps across the boundary-line. The old man clutched at the empty air, and fell heavily to the ground.

They carried him to the garret which had been his home so long, and tried to restore him to life—but all in vain. All that the selfish hopes and prayers of thirty years had failed to do was accomplished by that last supreme effort of self-forgetfulness. The Laird had won his freedom.

L. H. RANKEN.

MARKET CROSSES.



In ancient days England was beautifully decorated with Crosses of many kinds which played a part of various purposes, and even now we possess reminders and relics of those ornaments. But the majority of them have ruthlessly been destroyed. The Cromwellite campaign was responsible for the disappearance of hundreds, exquisite pieces of architecture that were simply hewn down with savage barbarity to satisfy the narrow-minded scruples of the Puritans; monuments not alone lovely to the sight, nor valuable as examples of the design of their different periods, but of personal historical import, bearing as many of them did, sculptured portraits of royal personages, after the manner of the cross that now stands in Fleet Street in the place of Old Temple Bar. The tendencies of people again, failing in reverence, are to be blamed for the loss of other crosses. "They were in the way," was the excuse often made; therefore they were taken down and the remains distributed far and wide, one piece perhaps finding an incongruous setting in a modern wall, another stuck up on a new gate, or (Vandalism of

the bitterest) even forming part of a villa rockery!

Out of a choice of several distinctive crosses, those known as Market Crosses form the subject of the present article, because it is not necessary to go far afield to find them. In several quaint old-fashioned country towns, of which we are still fortunate enough to own many in England, we see them. Perhaps we do not know much about architecture of this type, perhaps we have no time in this bustling age of ours to acquire much technical information on the topic; nevertheless, our eyes tell us that in the monument before us there is something passing mere ordinary interest, and worthy of a sensation just rather more lasting than the flash we are apt to bestow on show sights.



Malmesbury

The question that naturally rises to our minds when we stand before, say such a fine Market Cross as the one at Malmesbury, is, why were these buildings erected? Of course the obvious reply is that they were put there to create a centre in the town for the transaction of business. What the Market Cross developed into is the Market House or Market Hall, or even the Town Hall. This shows to a great extent what its primary intention was. Beneath its shade, or around it, according to its construction,

MARKET CROSSES.

were held the markets of the district. Proclamations were made to the people from it. Meetings were held beneath it, or in its immediate neighbourhood. Where a town became modernised and enlarged, it will be found that the Market Cross, as has been said, merged into the Market House and Town Hall by degrees, and for this reason, that whereas handsome large shops were built, not even a Market House was required, and whereas proclamations were made through the medium of the newspapers, the old method of announcing them by word of mouth was unnecessary. But why then, it may very pertinently be asked, were these buildings called Market Crosses? The illustrations shown here of true Market Crosses discover covered places, not necessarily even surmounted by a cross. The reason of the name is easily explained. In the days of Monasticism in England, when most of these erections were planned and raised, the clergy were wont to come and preach to crowds outside the sacred buildings. The place they chose was very fitly the centre of the village, and this, also very fitly, was the rendezvous of traders and people who came to buy. Thus it will be seen and found that in some cases there is a handsome and commodious covered Market Cross, and in others merely a monument surrounded by steps, round which all the life and business of the village will be transacted. The practice of preaching from these places is now discontinued; but as a centre the Village Cross is still pre-eminent in most small towns. In some cases the name Preaching Cross was given to such monuments, just as Weeping Cross was to those to which penitents used to go to lament their misdoings, and Sanctuary to the ones where hunted criminals and innocent persons pursued by robbers could find peace and immunity from harm or persecution. In certain instances, particular or typical names were given to these Market Crosses. Thus there is at Winchester the Butter Cross, and at Salisbury the Poultry Cross, the

latter an exceedingly noteworthy example of the architecture of Edward the Third's reign, or thereabouts, very picturesquely placed, and thoroughly in keeping with the antiquity of old grey Sarum city. Incidental mention has already been made of the Market Cross of Malmesbury. It, and Chichester, naturally run in one's memory with Salisbury and Oakham, for all of these are genuinely useful Market Crosses: canopied buildings capable of protecting many people from the weather. Unfortunately, very few of this type remain, and for that reason it is to be hoped that the specimens we have will always be strictly preserved. That they should share the fate of, say, Chester Cross, which, though not one of the canopied pattern, was very beautiful, would be indeed sad. This cross was demolished by the Cromwellites, and the remains buried near St. Peter's

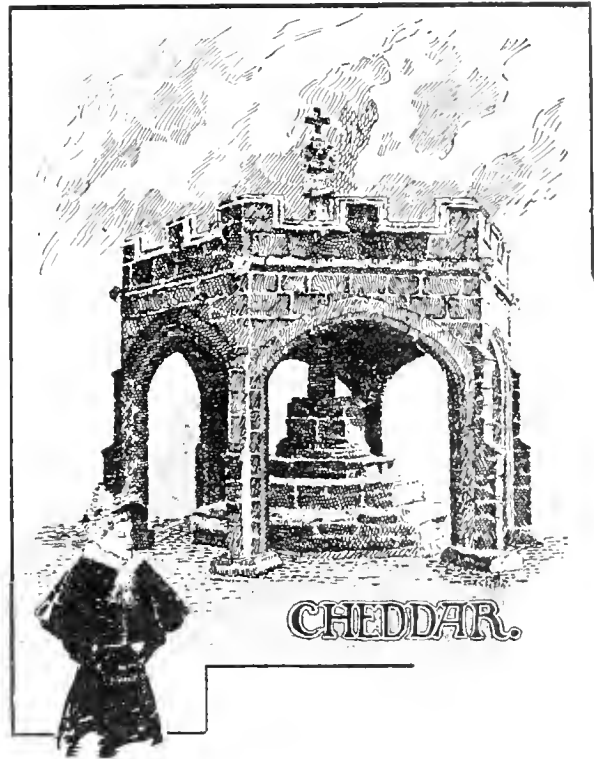


Church; whence early in this century they were taken to form an ornament in the grounds of Netherleigh House. We have happily no such rabid fanatics and purists in power among us now, and our parochial authorities are becoming more and more alive to the beauties of past masters in the

crafts of masonry: therefore we need no longer fear the demolition of treasures of this kind from such reasons as are accountable for the destruction of the crosses of past times. The good folks of Coventry, one would imagine, oftentimes rue the utilitarian ideas of their forebearers, who, late in last century, ruled that the cross that had adorned their ancient and interesting town for hundreds of years should be taken down, as cumbering the ground and being out of date. This cross in its palmyest days was so bright with gold that the people of the place could hardly bear to look on it when the sun was shining. When it was re-gilded it took 15,403 books of gold to cover it, and in order that its beauty should not be dimmed by carelessness, the Town Leet of that time passed a law making the fault of sweeping dust in the cross enclosure, without previously sprinkling the ground with water, punishable by a very heavy fine. To think that it should be no more, is lamentable.

The fine old cross at Bristol, of which the existing one is in a measure a copy, was moved from an ancient place for an even more foolish reason than these, namely, at the request of a silversmith who lived near it, who declared that whenever there was a high wind the edifice rocked in a dangerous manner. Instead of strengthening the fabric, had such a step been found to be necessary, the cross was removed bodily and thrown into the Guildhall as if it were valueless. After some time it was re-erected, this time opposite the Cathedral, only to be taken down again because it obstructed a pathway. This monument, like the one at Chester, ultimately found a resting place in a gentleman's grounds.

Ipswich, also, must lament its cross, pulled down during this century. It was remarkable



for the gigantic figure of Justice holding the scales which surmounted it. Unfortunately, the old Town Hall, the companion picture in picturesque beauty to the cross, was also taken down.

The ancient chronicler Leland writes of the cross at Malmesbury in eulogistic terms as "a right faire and costly piece of worke in the market place, made all of stone, and curiously vaulted, for poor market folks to stand dry when rain cometh." Anyone who has visited this most interesting old town will recollect its eight great pillars and open arches, with the one great pillar in the centre to uphold the structure. The Malmesbury Cross, however, is less elaborate than the one at Chichester, which archaeologists put at a somewhat later date. Both are almost alike in plan, but the Chichester Cross is open to the ground, while six of the Malmesbury archways have low walls which provide seats for those who care to use them.

The cross at Oakham is specially interest-



ing, both on account of its canopied form and because its pillars are made of oak. It is not to be mentioned with Chichester and Malmesbury for elaboration; but as being almost, if not entirely, unique of its kind, should be jealously treasured and highly appreciated.

Gloucestershire and the neighbouring counties are rich in relics of this interesting kind. Those in the village of Aylburton and Lydney are worthy of special comment as showing a peculiar style of architecture. They are supposed to have been the work of Italian designers, and are imagined to date from the fourteenth century. In idea they are much alike. The tall flight of steps leading to the column is the commonly found style in crosses of this kind, as opposed to the canopied Market Cross and the Gloucester and Bristol type, which had solid or open bases standing on the ground. The last cross of Gloucester taken down in 1750, was, as we

learn from prints, a most interesting specimen of the solid base cross. It is all the more deplorable that it was demolished, since in its niches there were well authenticated portrait statues of Kings John, Richard II., Henry III., and Edward III.

The Market Cross at Devizes is a good specimen of the solid base, not altogether successful as to beauty of contour, but interesting for a reason other than architectural. Its inscription records a singular tale, concerning the fate of a woman named Ruth Pierce, who in the very act of asseverating as truth a falsehood which she protested was absolute verity, with these awful words on her lips "I wish I may drop down dead if it is not so," did fall and expire.

The inscription sets forth the incident with these prefatory words:—"The Mayor and Corporation of Devizes avail themselves of the stability of this building to transmit to future times the record of an awful event which occurred in this market place in the year 1753, hoping that such a record may serve as a salutary warning against the danger of impiously invoking the Divine vengeance, and of calling on the holy name of God to conceal the devices of falsehood and fraud."

Though it would be delightful to enumerate in detail the all too few Market Crosses in their turn, they are numerous enough to make this impossible here. Remembering, therefore, with delight, but space sufficient only just to mention it, the cross at St. David's, that joy of the archaeologist the Cathedral village of South Wales, we pass on to two remarkable crosses of still another type of design. These are to found in the little village of Cheddar in the beautiful deep gorge of the Mendips, and at Shepton Mallet, a small town not far from Cheddar. The form in which they are built is a mixture of the canopied cross and the upright single column. Both are very famous crosses in the archaeologist's eyes, and the one at Shepton Mallet is supposed to have no rival in the whole of England, among crosses of its kind. At Glastonbury there was an old canopied cross once, but it

fell into absolute decay. Its substitute is tall and graceful, and ranks with the demolished one at Bristol in pattern.

Of the true cross, no more elegant examples can be quoted than the Whitefriars Cross, which stands about a mile out of Hereford, and was at one time the site of a market, and the Clearwell Cross in Gloucestershire. Both are raised upon steps, a device that always gives dignity and distinction to such a monument, and from centre columns spring most graceful crosses. The upper part of the Whitefriars Cross is comparatively new; the original was built by Bishop Charlton at the time that the great plague raged in Hereford. The one at Clearwell is believed to be of fourteenth century work.

At the neighbouring town of Abingdon, there was once what Leland very properly called "a right goodly cross of stone with faire degrees and imagerie" in the market place. When the treaty with the Scots was concluded in 1641, two thousand people gathered round that cross and sang the 106th Psalm. Alas, this fair landmark was sawn down three years later by Waller's army, one more tribute to the extravagant horror of the Cromwellians for what they deemed superstitious edifices.

It is difficult to bring so interesting a subject to a conclusion. Nevertheless, what must be must; and these scanty notices of a few of England's most ancient relics must terminate with a brief mention of the fine cross at Leighton Buzzard. As lately as September, 1894, this ancient cross became a topic of keen interest and controversy. It was rumoured at that time that the edifice would be put up for sale at Tokenhouse Yard, as part of the property of the lord of the manor. Happily, such a calamity was



averted. The estate was withdrawn from sale and with it the cross, and the present lord of the manor has given it in writing that he relinquishes all claim to the cross. Evidence proved that two hundred and fifty years ago a poll tax of fourpence per head was levied by the municipal authorities for the repair of the cross, which argues that the erection was at any rate considered to belong to the municipality.

MARY HOWARTH.

LETTERS TO A DEBUTANTE BY A WOMAN OF THE WORLD.

IV. - ON THE ADVISABILITY OF FRIENDSHIPS WITH MEN.

To condemn all friendships with those of opposite sex would be the extreme of fatuity; nevertheless, platonic friendships between very young people are full of pitfalls in fear of which the *debutante* must walk warily. It is difficult to say where the good comradeship ceases, and the love making begins. The transition is often so subtle that the principal actors in the drama are those least conscious of the phases through which they pass. We all, from nursery days upwards, have heard that the God of Love was blind, and likewise that lovers

"Cannot see

The pretty follies that themselves commit."

Propinquity in most cases has much for which to answer, and where those who propinquate are in the hey-day of youth and beauty there is undoubted danger. To make a hard and fast rule, however, that because people fall in love there shall be no more cakes and ale (in other words, the pleasures derived from the society of those of opposite sex) would be indeed absurd. There is small doubt that the society of man broadens and deepens a woman's outlook on life. Man is more logical, more open to conviction, less prejudiced, less narrow, slower to arrive at conclusions, but tenacious of opinions once carefully formed. Woman, on the other hand, has a humanising influence on man. Her intuition is quicker, she is more sympathetic; her heart beats sooner in response to the cry of misery. She influences (or ought to influence) man to be gentler, more considerate for the feelings of others, less harsh in his judgments. In fact, the ideal man and woman dovetail each other in character as much as ever did geography puzzle, and this being the case it is obvious that the society of men and women must be for their mutual benefit. In proportion as

civilisation advances does the companionship of woman and her influence become of higher value to man. Primeval woman existed as the servant and slave to man. Civilised woman lives as his partner and comrade. An ideal state of society would be that in which a friendship between men and women distinct from courtship or love making, should exist. The *jeune fille* of French society sees in every man a possible monster, ready on the smallest provocation to gobble her up. She cannot shake off her Convent tuition, or emerge at short notice from Conventual traditions. She is told from the beginning that man is the natural enemy of her sex, and she believes it. In Italy the *Signorina's* estimate of man is almost identical with that of the *jeune fille*. Before marriage all acquaintance with the ogre is conducted on the most guarded and ceremonious lines. After marriage comes the natural sequence of such habits. Unaccustomed to the society of men, the attractive *jeune mariée* finds the admiration and adulation which is her portion nothing short of intoxicating. She has had no sort of preparation which should enable her to preserve her moral ballast. In pure thoughtlessness and innocence she often does and says things which are not only highly imprudent, but which are also capable of misconstruction. In the husband who has been chosen for her, she frequently finds a being antipathetic to her in every idea. For sympathy she turns to one whose character or tastes appear to be all of which she has dreamed in the ideal man. The end is not far to seek. The *Cavaliere Servente* is soon an institution in her palace; she drifts hopelessly away from all chance of sympathy with her husband, he in turn becomes somebody else's *Cavaliere*, and we see the egregious folly of a social law which treats friendship before marriage as all wrong and after marriage as all right. Far be it for me to infer that the married woman should abjure the friendship of man other than her husband. Life would be slightly dull under such rigid conditions. Nevertheless, a woman's husband

should be her best friend, and no marriage can be a happy one where good comradeship and sympathy are not its foundation.

The intercourse between girls and young men is, in America, placed upon an entirely different and, *per contra*, a more natural footing. Men are not looked upon by parents and guardians as ogres; nor are fair maidens shut up, figuratively speaking, in lonely towers, surrounded by briar bushes. In France and Italy young unmarried men and women have absolutely no sort of chance as regards the formation of friendships. Girls are hedged about with convention and surrounded by a *chevaux de frise* of absurd restrictions. In America, the natural, frank, simple friendship of young man and maiden is accepted as the logical sequence of human nature and its requirements or conditions; nor does the feminine entity seem to have suffered in reputation by increased liberty of action. American girls are allowed to receive the visits of young men evening after evening, whilst the complacent parents efface themselves, amiably remembering the time-honoured axiom as to "two being company and three none." How this sort of thing would answer in England is a question for sociologists to determine. Mrs. Grundy is a lady whose tongue is as sharp as a two-edged sword, and in no society does that representative female flourish and grow fat to the extent she does in England. She is therefore a force to be taken into account and by no means to be despised. Meanwhile, remembering always that Caesar's wife should be above suspicion, it is open to doubt whether the social laws which regulate the intercourse of unmarried people are not too strict with us, although so much less stringent than in France or Italy. Take, for instance, the fact that here a married woman in her teens is given full liberty of action and every freedom; she may in fact steal her neighbour's horse, meanwhile that the unmarried spinster of thirty must not look over the hedge. In our Colonies the enfranchisement of unmarried woman has long been patent. In Canada, for

example, there is certainly no prudery in the intercourse of young unmarried men and women. There is none the less remarkable propriety. Hence I draw the conclusion that it harms neither young man nor maiden to trust them fully, and that a girl who has been wisely brought up and taught to discriminate between right and wrong, will not, when the responsibility for her actions is shifted to her own shoulders, belie her years of early training. Women are often (and most unjustly) accused of *finesse* or duplicity. Certainly nothing is more beautiful or more to be commended than perfect truthfulness but in their relations with mankind this virtue is not always possible for women. The reason is not far to seek. If a woman loves the man who is wooing her, she often affects coldness of demeanour that he may not think she is trying to entrap him, or ready to fall into his arms at the first suggestion of his love. No proud woman is won in a canter, nor do women who are worthy the name wear their hearts on their sleeves for daws to peck at. All women know that when a prize is difficult of attainment its value is proportionately enhanced in the eyes of him who seeks to make it his own. This truth Schiller has recognised in the lines

*"Licht Kommt der Allein,
Der ohne Hoffnung liebt."*

Which, although hyperbolically expressed, means pretty much what I have said. If, therefore, an excuse can be offered for want of candour, assuredly in her relations with man woman has justification.

No friendships—platonic or erotic—should be lightly entered into. We must remember:

"On the choice of friends
Our good or evil name depends,"

and also that:

"Who friendship with a knave hath made
Is judged a partner in the trade."

Therefore, dear *debutante*, if you plump for men friendships do so only after mature deliberation and always with discretion. Certainly not in the spirit of the one who said:

"A sudden thought strikes me,
Let us swear an eternal friendship."



It was Christmas-tide, and the great King Arthur was holding high festival with his court at Camelot. Brave knights and beautiful ladies were there, and the days went merrily by until the coming of the New Year. Then all joined together and praised God; gifts were exchanged, and there was great joy and mirth. On the days of state sat King Arthur and the beautiful grey-eyed Queen Guinevere, and all the knights of the Round Table. Arthur, gay and light of heart, called for some stirring tale to be told, or some knightly combat fought, to celebrate the coming of the New Year. He talked gaily with his knights, as with sound of trumpets the first course was brought in, and all the dainties in season were spread out upon the board.

Suddenly a sound of clashing armour was heard, and there rushed into the hall a great and goodly knight. He was taller in stature than any man on earth, and was clad entirely in green. His spurs were of gold, and his saddle and bridle were richly jewelled. His yellow hair hung curling over his shoulders, and a great beard fell on his chest. Strange to tell, he rode upon a green horse, whose mane was twined with golden threads, and his tail bound with a green band. Never before or since have such a warrior or such a horse been seen.

The knight had no spear or shield, but in one hand a holly bough, and in the other a keen axe, burning bright, with a curiously chased handle. He gave no greeting to the assembled company, but said: "Tell me who is chief among you, that I may speak with

him." There was a long silence, for all were struck dumb with fear and wonder. At last good King Arthur spoke, saying:

"Welcome, Sir, to this feast. I am Arthur the King, and if you will stay, you shall be our honoured guest."

But the Green Knight refused to stay, saying that he came but to seek and to prove the bravest knight among them.

"I come now in peace," said he, "as this branch may witness; but at home I have both shield and spear, and I know well how to wield them."

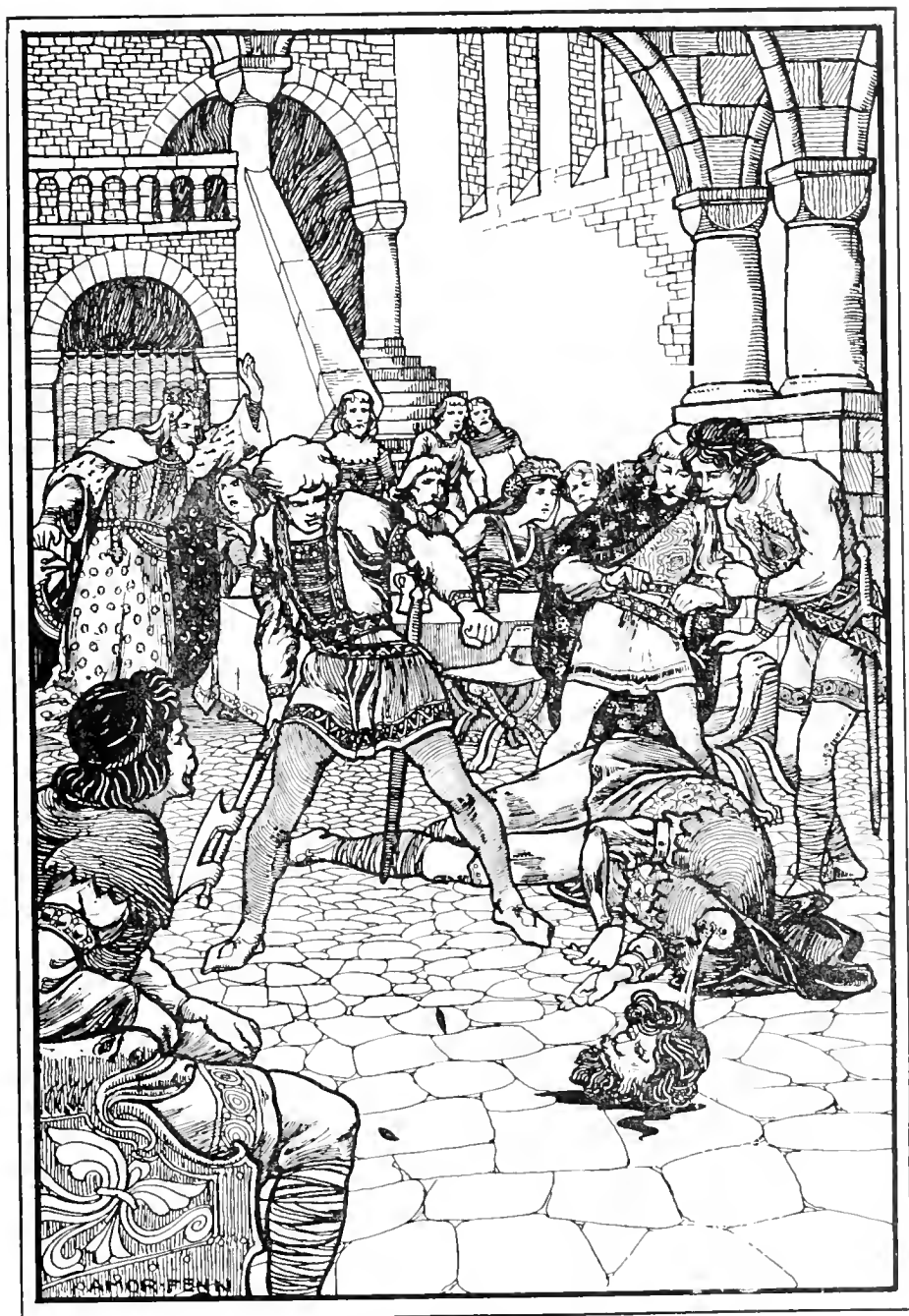
Then Arthur answered: "If you seek battle, I have many brave knights who will joyfully encounter you."

But the Green Knight replied that he sought no battle, for that no knight among them all was his match. In proof of this he offered his axe to whomsoever should choose to strike him, saying that he would abide the stroke, and would return it within a twelve-month and a day.

Again there was a long silence, for the Knight's aspect was very terrible, and it was no light thing to accept such a challenge. He stood and waited, bending his brows fiercely, and at length, on receiving no answer, cried scoffingly:

"Is this indeed Arthur's court, and can the renown of the Round Table be overthrown by one man's speech?"

The red blood rushed to Arthur's brow, and in a passion he answered, "There is none here afraid; give me your axe, and it shall be as you demand."



IT FELL TO THE EARTH.

SIR GAWAIN.

Then Sir Gawain, Arthur's nephew, rose from his seat by the Queen, and said :

"I beseech you, Sir King, let this adventure be mine ; it is not meet that you should take it upon yourself. And though I am the weakest here, yet I am not afraid."

The knights with one voice besought the King to grant Gawain's request, and Arthur consented. He gave the axe to Gawain, bidding him keep a steady heart and hand. Then the Green Knight asked the name of his foe, and Gawain gave it, saying that with joy he took up the challenge. The Green Knight was also glad.

"I will sustain your blow," said he, "but you must pledge your faith to seek me, and to return it."

"Where shall I seek you?" said Gawain. "Tell me your name and dwelling-place."

"First deal me your blow," said the Green Knight, "then shall you know my home and my name."

So the stranger lay down upon the ground, and threw forward his long curling locks, leaving his neck bare. With a mighty blow, Gawain severed his head from his body. It fell to the earth, and many spurned it with their feet. The blood gushed forth, but the knight never faltered ; he strode from the hall, and leaped into his saddle holding meanwhile the head in his hand. And the eyes opened, and the mouth spoke thus to Gawain :

"Forget not your promise, but seek until you find the Green Chapel ; there shall you meet me next New Year's morning, and I will return your blow."

Then he spurred his steed, and in a trice was out of sight.

After this strange scene, Arthur and Gawain laughed long and loud together. Then Arthur spoke to Queen Guinevere, saying "Dear lady, do not be afraid : such an adventure is meet for Christmas-time. Let the feast go forward, and Gawain, hang up your axe, for it has had sufficient use to-day."

Then the knights returned to the feast, and all went forward merrily until sundown.

For some time after, the strange adventure

was talked of at the court ; but the months went by, and the fresh bright spring, with its budding leaves and singing birds, gave place to summer, which ripened into autumn harvest, and declined into the cold white sleep of winter. Then Gawain began to think of the dread journey that awaited him, for it was no light thing that he had undertaken.

When All Hallows Day came round, King Arthur made a feast for his nephew. There was little joy among the knights and ladies, but they strove to jest, that they might cheer Gawain. Then Gawain spoke to his uncle, saying :

"My dear lord, you know my quest. I crave your leave to undertake it, for to-morrow I must go forth in search of the Green Knight."

Then all the nobles and ladies sought to comfort him, and there was great sorrow ; but he declared that he had but to do what was right, and that no fear dismayed him.

In the early morning, he rose, and asked for his armour. It was brought to him, and he donned it, prepared for whatever might await him. After hearing mass, and kneeling in silent prayer before the altar, he bade farewell to Arthur and the court, mounted his horse Gringolet, whose harness glittered like a sunbeam, and rode away. He bore upon his wrist a trusty shield, with a golden device of five points, being a token of truth. This well suited Gawain, for his heart was as white and clean as the daylight, and in purity and courtesy he had never been found wanting.

The court mourned and wept for him, for there was none like him upon earth, and they dreaded lest he should meet his death at the hands of the giant knight.

Meanwhile Gawain rode on through many a lonely way, having no companion but his horse, and none to cheer him save God alone. He passed through Camelot to Wales, and there he met rude and wild men, of whom he asked news of the Green Knight. But none had ever heard of him, and Gawain

went wearily on his way. He scaled cliffs, crossed streams, and met more foes than tongue can tell, both beasts and men. Only his courage and purity saved him from death.

The winter was sharp and bitter to bear, but he journeyed on steadfastly until Christmas-tide. Then he prayed the Virgin Mary that she would direct him to some shelter. On the morn he reached a huge forest, full of ancient and leafless oaks, overgrown with rough gray-green moss, and with many birds twittering dolefully upon their bare twigs. Gawain was eager to reach some dwelling, that there he might hear mass, and keep Christ's birthday. So he prayed again to the Virgin for help, and made the sign of the cross. Scarcely had he done so three times, than he saw in the wood, high on a hill, a lordly castle. It gleamed bright through the woodland in the clear wintry morning, and Gawain's heart grew glad within him on seeing it.

He rode to the great gate, but the drawbridge was raised, and he could not pass in. So he sat on the bank opposite, and wondered at the height and stateliness of the castle, with its lofty towers and battlements. The longing to enter grew stronger within him, and he called aloud for admittance. A courteous porter came to the gate, to know his will.

"Good Sir," said Gawain, "will you ask the lord of this castle if I may rest here?"

"Enter, and be welcome," said the porter, letting down the drawbridge. So Gawain passed in, and many knights and squires came forward to greet him. His horse was led to the stable, and the

lord of the castle came out to bid him welcome, placing all at his disposal. (Now this was in truth the castle of the Green Knight, though Gawain did not know it: and the lord was that knight himself, stripped of his strange disguise.)

A little page led Gawain to a chamber, bravely decked with tapestry. Here he put off his armour, and donned rich robes that well became him; never was seen a fairer knight. On seeking the hall again, he found a seat placed by the fireside, and a bounteous feast awaiting him. The lord of the castle



A LORDLY CASTLE.

questioned him as to his name and fame, whereon Gawain replied that he was of Arthur's court. Then there was great joy among the nobles, for they knew how true and how pure were all Arthur's knights, and they looked to learn much from Gawain. The day sped happily by, and after dinner the whole company sought the chapel, that they might hear evensong at the holy tide. And Gawain sat by the lord of the castle during the service.

When evensong was over, all sought the hall again. There Gawain saluted the lord's beautiful wife, who left her seat and came forward graciously to him. Not long after, all retired to rest, and slept peacefully until the morn of Christmas. Day broke over the castle. There was great joy and revelry, and Gawain was honoured by the beautiful lady of the castle, to whom he vowed knightly service. After three days of rejoicing, many left the place, but the lord sought to keep Gawain. The knight told him the story of his quest, and how he had promised to be at the Green Chapel by New Year's Day.

"I know it well," said the lord, "the Green Chapel is but two miles from this place, and if you will abide here until the time comes for your adventure, I will direct you there."

So Gawain gladly consented.

An agreement was made between them that the lord should go early to the chase, while Gawain remained in his bed, and broke his fast later with the lady of the castle. What each won during the day, that should he give to the other at eventide.

When the next day dawned, after early mass the lord went forth to the chase with many men and hounds, and hunted gaily all day. Meanwhile Gawain remained peacefully in his bed, according to their curious agreement. And as he lay there half slumbering, a light sound was heard at his door, and the beautiful lady of the castle softly entered. Gawain in surprise greeted her, saying:

"Let me rise, fair lady."

"Nay, no need," said she, "I am come to tell you that I love you, and am yours."

"Then I will be your faithful servant," said Gawain, and after much gay talk and questioning, the lady kissed him once, and left him. He then rose and went to mass, and afterwards made merry all day until moonrise and the coming of his host. The lord had had a goodly hunt, and he called for Gawain, bidding him take all the spoil of the day, for it was promised him. Gawain thanked him for his courtesy, and gave him a kiss, saying that he had won no other gift that day.

The next day passed in the same way. Again the lovely lady sought Gawain, and this time left him two kisses, which he gave at evening to her lord in return for the spoils of the chase.

Yet a third day passed, and again the lady came, this time offering Gawain a golden ring. When he would not have it, she gave him a girdle of green instead. This he took, for she assured him that the knight who wore it could be hurt by no wound. Three kisses were her parting gift, and these alone Gawain gave to the lord at eventide, for he could not make up his mind to part with the girdle. But this time he received in exchange no greater gift than the skin of a fox, for nothing more had his host slain that day.

Next morning Gawain made ready for his perilous quest, heedful first to bind on the lady's girdle beneath his armour. Sorrowfully he bade farewell to those who had treated him so kindly, and with a guide lent him by the lord of the castle, pursued his way to the Green Chapel.

The day was cold and stormy; snow whirled in the air and drifted in the dales, and each hill wore a cloak of mist. Gawain's guide led him to a hill at no great distance from the castle, saying:

"Close at hand is the Green Chapel. Truly, its lord is a fearsome knight; none may meet him and live. He has dwelt there long, and kills all whom he encounters. Nothing can avail against his blows. Let him alone, noble Gawain, and go home another way; I vow to God that I will never taunt you with it."



THE GREEN KNIGHT LEANED ON HIS AXE.

But Gawain said: "I should be a coward knight were I to shun this danger, and God can save me, if it be His will."

"If you will indeed lose your life," said the other, "take your helmet and spear, and ride to the bottom of the valley; there you will find the Chapel and its guardian." Having said this, he took leave of Gawain, and went back to the castle.

Then the good knight, alone and unaided, uttered no moan and shed no tear, but made ready to do as he had promised. He rode long through the dale, seeing no chapel, but only rough and stony banks. At last he saw a hill by a stream, and went to view it closely; no chapel was there, but only an old cave in a crag.

"This is a strange den," said Gawain, "where the Man in Green may offer up his devil-worship; never did I see so unholy a chapel before."

Wandering near it, suddenly he heard a loud noise like grinding scythes and rushing mill streams. But he was not afraid, and called aloud, asking for speech with him that dwelt in the cave. A voice spoke, bidding him stay; and out of a rocky cleft came the Green Knight, clad as before, and bearing a new and terrible axe. He crossed the stream with a clatter, and met Gawain with no greeting. But the courteous knight spoke to him, and the Green One answered: "God preserve you! you have not forgotten our covenant, that on New Year's Day I should return your blow? Take off your helmet, and yield me that which is due to me."

"As you will," said Gawain, fearlessly baring his neck.

Then the Man in Green seized the great axe and whirled it aloft, and as it glided down, Gawain unwittingly shrank a little. The other chid him, saying:

"This is not the fearless Gawain, for you tremble before the blow falls. I did not shrink from your stroke; therefore am I the better knight."

"I will not fail a second time," answered Gawain. "Strike, and I will stand firm."

The Green Knight aimed a terrible blow, and Gawain never moved; the blow however did not fall.

"Now I must strike you," said the other, and he let his axe fall (but lightly) on Gawain's neck, so that the blood flowed. Then Gawain unsheathed his sword, saying:

"I granted you but one stroke; that you have struck; now will I meet you in fair fight."

Then the Green Knight leaned on his axe, and gazed at his fearless foe, saying:

"Lay aside your anger; I have given you the blow I promised. Two I aimed for our covenant, because you kissed my fair wife; I did not strike, for you rendered me back the kisses as you had promised. The third time I let the blow fall, for the girdle you did not restore, and it is mine. That was your only sin; I sent my wife to try you, and I have proved you the purest knight God ever made."

Then Gawain was all confused, and threw the girdle at his feet, calling himself a coward and unfaithful. But the other laughed, and said:

"So fully have you owned your slight fault, that I hold you sinless. Take the girdle, as a token of our meeting at the Green Chapel, and come home with me to my castle for the New Year festival."

"Nay," said Gawain, "though I thank you much for your courtesy. With your leave I shall keep this girdle, and shall look on it when pride of knightly prowess assails me. But now I must seek Arthur's court again with all speed. Tell me then your name, that our compact may be completely fulfilled."

"I am called Bernlak de Hautdesert," said the knight, "and I was sent by Morgan le Fay to prove the fame of the Round Table. She is Arthur's sister, and your aunt. Come and see her at my house, where we hold festival."

But Gawain firmly and courteously refused, and journeyed quickly homewards. There he was greeted with deep joy. He told his

adventures, showed the token, and owned his cowardice with tears, vowing to wear the girdle for the rest of his life as a badge and a reminder.

Then Arthur, knowing the noble purity of Gawain, spoke words of comfort, and each knight of the Round Table swore evermore to wear for Gawain's sake a belt of brightest green. Thus happily ended his toilsome quest.

IN SCHOOL.

III.—WORK.

MUCH to my surprise, I was put into the second class. I knew that my spelling had none of the quaint originality of Jack's, and I was equally conscious of a certain superiority over him in minor matters of French and history, for which he loved to profess a sincere contempt, based on rudimentary Latin and ignorance; but, for all that, I was quite unprepared to be found worthy of ranking with Nancy Waterhouse and Madge Smith, and all the other superior people, who had treated me like a mere child ever since my arrival. Nor were they backward in letting me know, that their surprise was quite equal to mine.

"Hullo! what are *you* doing here?" asked Madge, ungraciously, when I presented myself, nervously, at my first arithmetic lesson. It was another surprise to me, to find that Nancy, the patronising, overbearing Nancy, was at the bottom of her class, and, in consequence, sat next to me. Clearly, my school-fellows did not base their supremacy on anything so trivial as talent or ability, and I made another note in their favour, for the edification of Jack in my next letter.

"I'm not doing anything yet," I replied, humbly and truthfully. "I didn't know there

was anything to do, until Miss Poland came."

"I didn't mean *sums*, stupid!" retorted Madge, with brusqueness. "But why on earth aren't you in the third, with all the other kids?"

"I didn't know there was a third," I said, a little assertively. "Did *you* always know things before you were told, when you were a new girl?"

I quite forgot, until I saw Madge's face, that, of course, she never had been a new girl at all; but the arrival of Miss Poland, or, as the girls more familiarly termed her, "Roley-poley," put an end to our conversation.

Miss Poland was an eminently cheerful, little person. She taught arithmetic as though it were some delightful new game, which we were all pining to know; and she showed a gentle endurance for the absurdities of recurring decimals, and compound interest, which gave them quite a personal significance. How anyone could teach arithmetic, and remain human, was a mystery to me; but I felt that Roley-poley was the exceptional person who could, and I mentally calculated the possibilities of buying her a bunch of violets, when the opportunity should occur. Violets, at the moment, seemed the only adequate expression of my gratitude for her tolerance of my home-taught arithmetic, and it was not very long before my intended gift reached the dimensions of several bunches. For arithmetic had always been my weak point. Even when I was alone, I was never very brilliant over it; but the presence of fifteen other girls, who worked out their answers with maddening rapidity, and never seemed to ink their fingers in the process, sent my opinion of myself down to its lowest ebb. The knowledge that every one of those fifteen girls considered, that I ought to have been placed in the third class, did not make me any happier, and I sighed miserably, as I delivered up my note-book for the inspection of Roley-poley. She looked at it thoughtfully. I felt she had every reason to be meditative. I knew what masses of badly-formed figures covered those two

pages of my note-book; and I wondered, wretchedly, why anyone should take all that trouble, to discover the price of one pound of brown sugar, when there were grocers in every street who knew it without any arithmetic at all.

"The answer is—is not quite clear," she observed. Fifteen pairs of remorseless eyes were witnessing my discomfiture, and fifteen pairs of ears awaited my trembling reply.

"Three hundred pounds, seven shillings, and eightpence, and ninety-five ninety-sixths," I said, sadly. "It seems rather a lot of money for brown sugar, doesn't it?"

Astonishment pervaded the fifteen faces beyond me, and Roley-poley looked at me, sharply. Apparently, my expression saved me, for she returned to the sum; and I, who had not, of course, tried to be funny at all, felt slightly comforted on finding that Roley-poley, at least, had more sense than all those other fifteen, who did their sums correctly, but did not know a bad joke from a good one. I felt almost convinced, that Jack would have approved of Miss Poland.

"There, I said you ought to have been in the third," remarked Madge, cheerfully, when we met again at the history class. The discovery that I was as stupid as she expected to find me, seemed to have improved her spirits wonderfully.

"It's not my fault," I complained. I was not in a position to contradict her, after my recent exposure over the brown sugar sum, but I felt a vague grudge against Miss Strangways, all the same, for not having had as much perception as Madge Smith, in which case I should have been placed, where I ought to have been—"with the other kids, in the third."

"Nobody said it was," replied Madge, most unreasonably. "You shouldn't talk so much."

I was quite willing to relapse into silence, and studied my history carefully. But this did not seem to please her any better.

"I wish you wouldn't *grind* so," she grumbled, presently. "It's very dull to sit next to anyone who never opens her mouth, even when there *isn't* a class going on."

I shut up the book, hastily, and said the first thing that came into my head.

"Do you like Charles I. or Cromwell best?" I inquired, in the most obliging manner I could assume.

"Like them?" exclaimed Madge. "Why, who ever thought of liking anyone in a history book? How awfully queer you are!"

"But you must know which one you like best," I persisted. "They're so different, don't you know?"

"I don't see it myself," said Madge. "They're not people at all, to begin with; and you can't like somebody who isn't there, can you? Besides, they are alike. They're both dead, for one thing, and they're both in the history book, for another. Real people, like us, never get into history books at all; it's only musty, slow, old fogeys——"

"Elizabeth wasn't a bit slow, or Henry VIII," I interrupted. "You couldn't call Henry VIII slow, could you? Then, there was Richard I; don't you like Richard I? I do. He killed such a lot of people, and never got killed himself. He could sing, too; don't you remember how he got out of prison, just because he knew how to sing, when What's-his-name came along, and—oh! no, Richard I wasn't a bit slow. His wife had beautiful long hair, too. It would be heaps jollier if people were like that now, wouldn't it? Nobody ever has any excitement now; if you're grown up, you turn into a drawing-room visitor, and go to dances, and that's all."

"I'd much sooner go to dances than be inside a stuffy history-book," retorted Madge. "So would you, really; only you pretend you wouldn't, just to look different. I had a new evening dress, last holidays, white silk with chiffon sleeves; I'm going to wear it at the break-up party. That's better than being in a history-book, isn't it?"

"Nobody can be in a history-book, *now*," I explained, hastily. "Nobody ever is. And mine is pink crepon, with——"

The voice of Miss Strangways broke in upon our interesting discussion. The rival

merits of Cromwell and Charles I., of white silk and pink crepon, had been sufficiently engrossing to cover her entrance into the room; and we buried our heads in our notebooks, and assumed the necessary expression of meek indifference, when she looked in our direction.

But, the most interesting of all our lessons was the weekly lecture on composition. This was a recent innovation; and, for the first time, I felt on a level with my companions, as I raised my voice with theirs in eloquent protest against all innovations, and against this particular one, most of all. But, in spite of ourselves, our new lecturer began to make some sort of an impression on our unwilling minds, before she was half through her first lecture. There was something completely new about her, something that nettled us, and something that fascinated us. She was very young, and very contemptuous, and very enthusiastic. She talked to us as though we had nothing to do all the week, except write compositions for her; and she seemed to take it for granted, that we all wanted to be authors some day, but were too foolish to know how to begin now. And, as hardly any writer, past or present, seemed good enough for her, we naturally had little hope of being able to please her. And the curious thing was, that, partly goaded by her contempt for our foolishness, and partly inspired by her turgid enthusiasm, we really did feel constrained to do our very best, in writing those compositions of ours.

"Say what you mean," she urged. "Half the time, you are only echoing what hundreds of other people think they mean. Try to forget what other people think, and find out what you think yourselves. Very likely, you never have thought before. Very well, then; think *now*. Don't cultivate your memory, cultivate your observation; the world will become a different place for you, if you do. There are myriads of things, pregnant with interest, all round you, at this moment, and you don't even know they are there. Try and find them out. Discover your own sense of

humour; you all have it, somewhere; you will find, that it is often only a trick of circumstance, that makes you laugh at a thing you might otherwise have cried at. Don't be afraid of putting *yourselves* into your compositions; we are all so ridiculously afraid of giving ourselves away. What does it matter, if we do? It is all we have to give, most of us, and it is not very much at the most. Besides, what else do you suppose we are here for?" And so on, all through the lecture. We had never heard anything like it, before; our youthful schoolgirls' hearts beat warmly in response to the extreme youthfulness of our lecturer; our minds were filled with ideas for the composition we were going to write for her. The subject was to be "Life in a Country Lane," and, for the next week, we talked of little else but our composition, and our composition lecturer. But, when Thursday came round again, and we sat in our places before her, the misgiving crept into the hearts of many of us, that we had not entirely expressed what Miss Ashwood expected of us. Nor did Miss Ashwood's manner, as she read one after another of our papers, re-assure us in any way. She began with the head-girl's.

"The 'Life in a Country Lane' is very varied," it began. "Very few of us, perhaps, have noticed how very varied it is, but then very few of us notice anything at all. Most of us only notice what somebody else has noticed before, and that is because our memory is good, but our observation is bad. So it is in a country lane. Many of us can remember all the books that have been written about country lanes, but can one of us remember what there really is to be seen in a country lane? Alas, no! Perhaps, it is because we have no sense of humour, and that is why we often laugh at things that ought to make us cry. Ah, indeed, the life in a country lane teaches us how many things there are, all round us on every side, which we have never noticed before, and this is most interesting. There are flowers to begin with; convolvulus, and crocuses, and briar

roses, and wild thyme, and others as well. Perhaps, Shakespeare was thinking of the life in a country lane when he wrote, "I know a bank whereon the wild thyme grows."

We waited, breathlessly, for the lecturer's comment on the essay of our head girl; so much observation and erudition should not, we felt, be without its meed of praise. She did not say very much, however; indeed, her enthusiasm seemed to have greatly declined, since last week. She just glanced over it, and remarked, casually, "Even Shakespeare, I think, would not make crocuses and briar roses bloom together." And then, she passed on to the next paper, and Dorothy Pearson looked surprised.

Gradually, a distinct gloom began to settle down on the composition class. If we had all put ourselves into our essays, as we had been recommended to do, there was evidently a certain monotony about our personalities; and our lecturer's comments grew fewer and fewer, as she laid down paper after paper. We could not make much of her expression, as the lesson dragged on its weary way, but we noticed, that she did not tell us any longer to think for ourselves. There was a momentary diversion when she came to Nancy Waterhouse's. It certainly had a style of its own, if the matter was slightly familiar to us, and we listened with great admiration to the flowing phrases, and the strings of adjectives.

"The life in a country lane," it began (this being, by the way, the unvarying way in which all the thirty-eight essays began)—"may be seen in any country lane you like to mention. We will take a very beautiful one as an example. I can see it before me as I write; it is verdantly green, and romantically sequestered. It is luxuriantly full of exquisite flowers with the most delicious rainbow hues and the sweetest of alluring perfumes. Here are majestic poppies and nodding violets, there is the humble pansy and the rich westeria; tropical creepers hang in rank profusion from the tree ferns and the coconut palms, while the banyans stand in solitary

dignity among the dear old oaks and elms of merry England. It is a wonderful little country lane, remarkable at once for its rich beauty and its glorious simplicity. Our gentle Will loved to sing of 'sweet musk roses and eglantine,' while our beloved Wordsworth—"

The lecturer sighed, and did not finish the elegant composition of Nancy Waterhouse. "It is well," she suggested, "to avoid familiarity with the poets." The rest of us wondered why Nancy had put the advanced Geography Reader into her essay, instead of herself.

At last, my turn came. I had never felt so frightened in my life. If the other compositions had not satisfied the expectations of Miss Ashwood, what would she think of mine? For, my knowledge of the poets was confined to Edmund Lear, and the great Strewelpeter; and my only experience of country lanes had had been gained in the summer holidays, when Jack and I had gone beetle-hunting. And, my adjectives were limited, and—colloquial. So I sat with lowered eyes and burning cheeks, while my paper was read, and my schoolfellows tittered.

"The life in a country lane is very lively," I had written. "There are lots of jolly things you can't get in London, or any of those moggly places where there isn't any life at all. The best thing to do is to put your head down on the ground, and listen: it is just beautiful, you hear all the sounds that are worth hearing, all sorts of beetles whirring, and bees humming, and gnats singing, and they are all as different as anything, and after a little while you can tell one from another, and it is like being in an awfully jolly new place where you never were before. And if you look up through the hedge, you don't see people or dull things like that, but you see thousands of green branches and twigs that look as though they were roads going away somewhere. I am sure they do go somewhere, but some people say they don't. I like catching beetles, and letting them crawl over my hand; some people like

putting them into boiling water and then sticking them with pins for his collection, but I don't. Some people say it is stupid to mind because it doesn't hurt them, and he says he supposes I can't help it because I am a girl, but sometimes I think he is wrong and I don't half mind being a girl. And we both think that the life in a country lane is the jolliest kind of life in the whole world."

Everybody was giggling. I wished I could get away, and hide somewhere. Of course, I was ignorant and foolish; of course, my composition was ill-written and disgraceful; but, was it my fault that I had not read any poetry, and did not know the names of flowers? The lecturer spoke at last.

"Will the writer of the last composition kindly stand up?" she was saying. I staggered to my feet, and fought desperately to keep back my tears. I could see, through a sort of mist, that she was smiling at me.

"So you wrote this, all by yourself?" she said. "Then, take my advice, and try to improve your language and style. I want you to try very hard, if you will, for everyone can do that much; and you have something else already, that neither I nor any one else could ever teach you. And that is the great thing."

I sat down, with my head whirling. I could not have said what her exact meaning was, but I had grasped this much, that she was not laughing at me, and that she thought I might write as elegantly as the head girl, some day. My schoolfellows were no longer tittering, and some of them nodded encouragingly at me. My period of probation was over, and no one said anything more about my not being in the third. I wished I had not spent so much of my pocket-money on Miss Poland's violets, until I reflected that all the violets in the London streets would not have expressed the state of my emotions at that moment. In a kind of dream, I heard the subject given out for next week's composition; I did not hear what the lecturer was saying, but I noticed that her expression

had saddened considerably, since she came into the room.

And I do not think she ever again recommended us, to put *ourselves* into our compositions.

EVELYN SHARP.

THE WELSH ALMA MATER.

"What may your motto be,

O College by the sea?

"Mid byd byd heb wybodaeth," answer we,

While wind and wave make merry minstrelsy.

Rage ye gales, ye surges seethe,

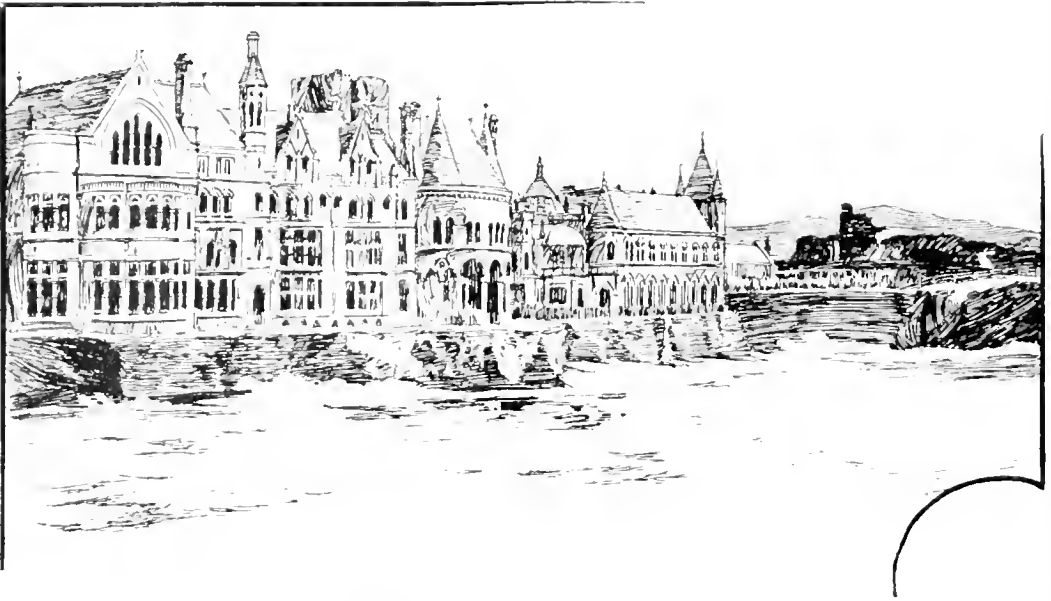
Aberystwyth fu a fydd."

College Song.

In the days of long ago, when the land was musical with the songs of the bards, it was at Aberystwyth that the final ordeal for admission to the order took place. The novice was set adrift in an open boat. With the rush of the Atlantic around him he sent up a sudden, swift prayer to the gods, for the fair breeze which should waft him to the shores of Carnarvon. If his prayer were answered men knew that he had been accepted for service on earth. If he were carried out to sea it was charitably surmised that his services were required "in higher and more spiritual regions"! The quaint legend has been handed down from Celt to Celt, and to those who love Aberystwyth best it seems a fitting genesis for "the College by the sea."

Fifty years ago a wave of the great movement for higher education swept over Wales. It was caught up with an almost pathetic enthusiasm by the Welsh people. They believed in the equality of ranks by instinct, which, as Diderot says, is better than believing in it by reflection. Thus the motif of the institution they worked out—an institution bounded by no laws of creed beyond the broad law which makes for brotherhood—was to unite all classes in the development and culture of the nation.

The whole history of the College is one



THE COLLEGE FROM THE SEA.

of strong and patient effort. It struggled on unaided until its brilliant work roused the attention of the State. A Committee of Welsh education was elected, with the wholly unexpected result that the idea of one national College was given up, and Cardiff and Bangor were chosen as the sites of the Colleges for North and South Wales. Aberystwyth seemed abandoned.

But the Welsh people took up the cause of the pioneer institution. Funds poured in; the number of students increased; examination successes became more and more pronounced; ultimately, Government made a grant, and again "the day broke."

However, a harder blow was to follow. In July, 1885, the College caught fire. Very reverently, very lovingly, very silently, Aberystwyth students bear the memory of the touching incidents of that night. By morning two-thirds of the building was a blackened ruin. There is a tradition that a student, on seeing the glare on sea and sky, broke out into a horrified ejaculation of: "The last day has dawned!" But burnt down as it was, the last day had by no means dawned for the little world of Aberystwyth.

Again the Welsh people rallied round, and soon the stately building stood as before, facing the sea.

The sea spreads its witchery around one and about one in one's college days. Through the ripple and recoil of the waves on the cliffs, russet and amber sea-weeds shine like sunken stars. When the evening mists lay their touch upon the mountains—as the shadows of things denied lay their touch upon human lives—the sunset suddenly floods the waters like a glory. It catches the purple hill-side until each dusky peak flushes rosily, and the heights of Snowdon glow like burnished gold. Then the waves say: Hush! hush! and one learns one's lesson in silence.

Youths and maidens work and play and fight together. Thrown into a frank camaraderie, in which each side can give so much in the way of help and sympathy, pleasant friendships are formed, whose charm lingers on long after college days are over, and the real battle of life has begun. The women students attend the same lectures and classes, and appear in the same terminal lists as the men. Their position in the College is the

same, excepting in the matter of residence, for, whereas the men may board out, the women are required to reside in the Hall. The fee for the whole session is ten pounds, while the terms for board and residence are from thirty-one to forty guineas. The Hall of Residence was lately opened by the Princess of Wales, and is known as the Alexandra Hall.

Fortunately for the College the services of Miss Carpenter, the Lady Principal, were secured, at the moment when she was deciding to lay down educational work and enter on, what she herself calls, "a restful old age." But the Aberystwyth post once accepted, she took up the work with a single-heartedness which has made it a financial, as well as an educational, success.

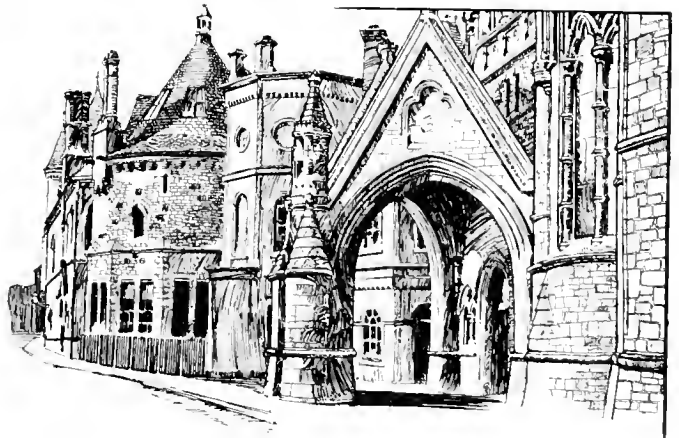
The Hall, like the College, faces the sea. The dash of the waves is on the rocks beneath, and the salt spray reaches the windows of the students' study bed-rooms. Very quaint, very tiny, very charming are these study bed-rooms. All are daintily neat; all are fresh with the fragrance of wild-flowers — purple hyacinths and early primroses, with here and there a bunch of wood-violets. Pictures and books and delicate colours—those good gifts from palace beautiful—are all to be found in these little rooms, sometimes expressed profusely, sometimes with a pathetic simplicity which tells its own story. And everywhere the sunshine, as it dances through the windows, lights upon great bowls of the mountain-gorses, whose blossoms are massed in golden flakes on the hills beyond.

The life from day to day is as full as it is pleasant. Breakfast over, note-books are seized, and a laughing battle with wind and spray along the promenade brings the group of girl graduates to the College. Unlike the women in that German University who were grudgingly per-

mitted to sit behind a screen, the Aberystwyth women occupy the front desks in the various lecture-rooms. The men number about two hundred, the women one hundred and fifty, whilst upon the staff, numbering about thirty, there is only one lady-lecturer. The masculine element gets a certain amount of amusement in an artless "Yes, sir!" when the latter calls the register, and supplies logic examples, such as "some men smoke," with the most bland promptitude. But beneath the school-boy fun there is a stirring and vigorous life in these mixed classes which makes for the best work.

Almost all are preparing for examinations—some for Oxford and Cambridge scholarships, some for London University degrees, some, again, for the degree of the University of Wales. An audacious suggestion that the University of Wales "should grant a degree to anyone who can understand its syllabus," has been met by the authorities with chilling silence.

The five or ten minutes' interval between lectures is spent by students and professors alike in strolling round the quad. Here college-doings are discussed, tennis-sets arranged, and culprits given to "cutting" lectures harangued. Above is the Library, with its quaint windows and book-cases, between which rare pictures shine like jewels in their oaken



THE MAIN ENTRANCE.



THE DEVIL'S BRIDGE.

setting. At any hour of the day men and maidens can be seen culling the honey of wisdom from the book-lined walls. It was here that Principal Roberts once sent in a hurry for the Greek Lexicon. But the Librarian was considerably staggered when the student who had it in possession refused to give it up, advancing the highly probable hypothesis that the Principal must know more Greek words "out of his own head" than he did himself. The story reminds one of another modest Aberystwythian, who placed Alfred the Great's words, "Do not blame me if any know Latin better than I, for each of us must do what he does according to his ability," at the head of her classical paper, the "if" having a somewhat patent significance, as the examiners were to find.

Lectures over, the afternoon has pleasant times in store. On the tennis-courts, where the men's green velvet caps make picturesque

glints of colour, all is animation. A swift run on the hockey-field, or a race with the tide, sets young feet dancing just because it is so good a thing to live. It is happiness to dream on the beach in the sunshine, and watch the sails of the fishing smacks turn to silver against the blue; it is better still to step into a boat and send it sweeping over the waves, with the long, easy stroke born of much practise. The golden days when "the youths and maidens were wont to sail together for their delight" are no more, and the College mourns over their loss. "Aforetime, although we had no hire, it beliked us to have the women on board," says the College chronicler plaintively. No one dreams of disputing his statement, but a watchful Council on thoughts of accidents intent put an end to these excursions, and decreed that the most fitting protector for the young oarswomen was an experienced sailor. But the keenest interest is still taken in all boating records, and on the great race day between the science and arts students the whole College assembles on the pier and applauds the winners with much enthusiasm.

After boating or tennis, there is something exhilarating in the hum of voices which proclaims that a tea party is on in the rooms of a friend. A College tea is a delightful institution. The table, with its pretty china, is spread out in most inviting fashion; one's hostess with flushed cheeks and laughing eyes, sits upon the rug attempting to toast crumpets on the end of a penholder; the firelight flickers on the dimpled faces of the guests; and talk and laughter bubbles over.

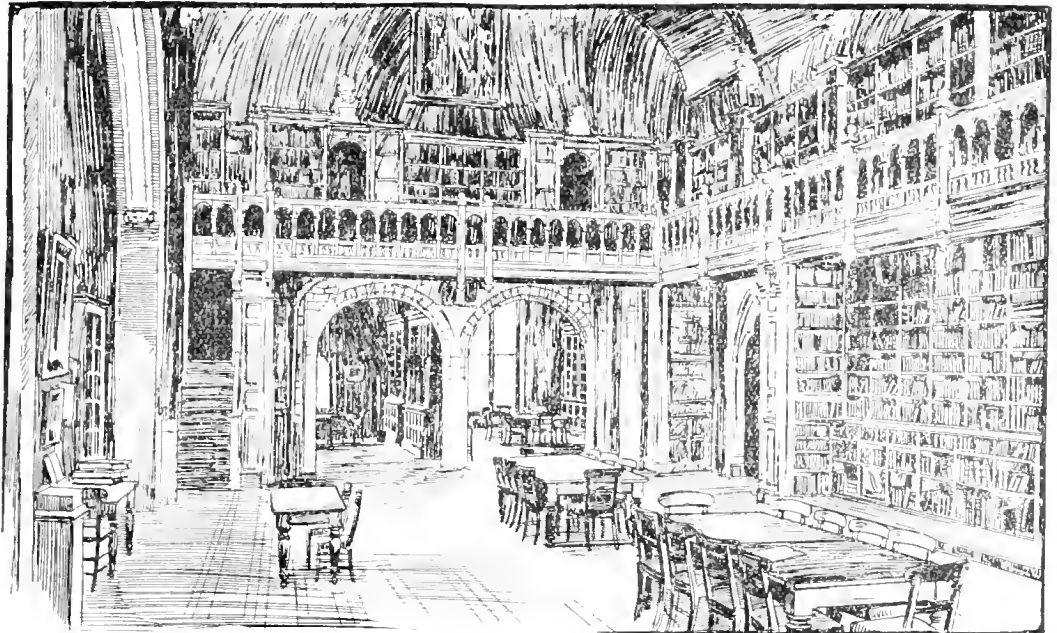
After tea come some hours of steady work, in which no drudgery is shirked. Very softly, very tenderly, would we shelter each girlish life. But it may not be. In the struggle of life ahead each must fight for her own hand. Sorrow, loneliness, and the love which is pain, will come to them all. With the strength won in the bright play-time must each do battle with them. If the play-time were used aright, if "God so granted it to them," the good fight fought will end in victory.

The various College societies occupy some part of every evening. Very popular is the Dramatic Society, whose members give small performances during the session, and produce one longer play every Christmas. The French and the German Societies meet at the houses of the different Professors. The Celtic Society is carried on in Welsh, and its proceedings—miniature Eisteddfods and the like—are to some extent shrouded in mystery. Occasionally, on Saturday evenings, there is a meeting of the Chess Club at the Hall of Residence, with one of the Professors' wives for a chaperon. The Musical Society meets once a week, and at the end of the Easter term gives a concert, to which the public is admitted. Professionals come down to take the chief solos, but their efforts are ably supplemented by the College Orchestra, whose members, singing "*comme l'oiseau chant*," have in their voices all the peculiar sweetness and spontaneity of the Celt.

At its weekly meetings the Literary and Debating Society discusses all things in heaven and earth. This, as John Morley would say, "certainly gives it the advantage

of a splendid variety of topics." The fate of the nation hangs on the breathless moment in which the House decides whether it is advisable "that a Second Chamber be retained as part of the British Constitution," while blooming cynics artlessly discuss "whether, in order to love mankind, we must expect little from them," a proposition which to the rest of us has become self-evident. When impromptu speaking is the order of the day, statements as startling as they are unexpected are occasionally advanced. Called upon without a moment's notice to convince her audience that "cruelty to animals blunts their sensibilities," a youthful orator promptly instanced the case of the ass. She besought her hearers to believe that the apparent stupidity of the latter animal was caused by man's ill-treatment, the ill-treatment itself being the result of ignorance. In a silence which could be felt she gave utterance to the prediction: "When people are better educated there will then be a new race of donkeys!"

The Literary and Debating Society has the most charming entertainment of the year, always excepting the dances given by Miss



THE LIBRARY.

A CHAT ON COINS.

Carpenter about three times a term. There is great competition among the men for invitations; but it is only the greater lights among the maidens — "the Finals" — who are admitted. Upon each pretty little programme fourteen dances are set down, and by a law as unalterable as the law of the Medes and Persians not more than two may be danced with the same partner. Considerable confusion was caused by a graceless Editor of the Magazine, who warned unwary damsels that in future the authorities would consider those who refused to dance more than twice with the same partner as guilty as those who accepted! In the days when the women-students resided in the Hostel, the feelings of one of their number were hurt by a remark which appeared in the Editor's leader. The latter immediately wrote an apology. Up to that time his signature had been a flourishing Omega. It now assumed the character of an abject half-moon, under which appeared the words: "Sat on through a *hostel* demonstration!"

The spring-time which brings the violets brings many pienes in its train. In after days it seems that no pienes are like those College ones. The waggonettes wind through daisied dales under the shadow of the great mountains. The blackthorn touches the dark boughs with its cloud-like blossoms, and the thrush sings a lovely song, which wakes the apple-blossoms on the hills. The river sings, too, as it winds between its mossy banks to its home, the sea. But the song it sings is of great deeds dared by tired lives and victories won. Only those on whom the night-have-been of life has pressed most heavily can fully understand that song. So the river sings it very softly, not to sadden young hearts. And in the evening, when the stars come out over the mountains, and far and far away in the moonlight one sees the shining of the sea, the College song is sung. The refrain, "Aberystwyth fu a fydd," rings out triumphantly. And Taliesin the Bard smiles as he sleeps among the primroses. For in far-away ages Taliesin made a prophecy of

the Welsh folk, and his prophecy has come true: "Their God they shall worship; their language they shall retain; their land they shall lose except wild Wales."

KENT CARR.

A CHAT ON COINS.

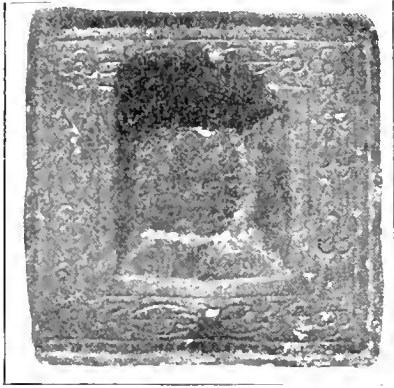
I must confess that I was lamentably ignorant on the subject when I paid my visit to Messrs. Spink and Son, the well-known numismatists of Piccadilly — my chief idea was that I was about to be initiated into the hobby of millionaires. My error in this respect was soon set at rest; I was assured that a person of very moderate means can get together a most interesting collection, if he confines himself to any particular series. In comparison with a taste for postage stamps, or tram tickets, it is far wider in scope, and infinitely more durable. Time has no effect on these records of by-gone days; we can look at gold and silver coins dating as far back as 500 and 600 B.C. Those from Lydia, Cyzicus, and Lampracus, formed of electrum, a natural alloy of gold



FIGURE 1. THE ROMAN COIN

and silver, are as fresh as though struck in a modern mint. The light thrown on history by coins is incalculable, and unailing in accuracy. It is hard to say how much we have learned of the "glory that is Greece" through these dumb survivals of the past. Thus we have a coin struck by Claudius in B.C. 46 to commemorate the conquest of Britain; the design is a triumphal arch, inscribed with the words "DE BRITANNIA."

Another mistake of the embryo numismatist is, that age lends value to a coin. This is altogether a fallacy, perfect condition and



MALAY KAPANG IN LEAD

rarity counting as everything, and taking precedence of antiquity. In this way, a rare Roman coin in poor state, may be valued under two pounds, while a rare Victorian penny in perfect state is worth twelve or fifteen pounds; and a crown of William the Fourth fetches the large sum of twenty pounds.

To mention a few of the more expensive coins, I may refer to a fifteen-shilling piece of James I., with a lion supporting shield, and a thirty-shilling piece, with only the shield. An Edward VI. sovereign, measuring $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, reaches the high value of £125. The mint mark is an ostrich head, with the king on his throne, resting his feet on a portcullis. A copper farthing of Charles II. period, struck in gold, has increased in worth to £30, and a five-shilling piece commemorating the same merry monarch's reign is worth £100. This is struck in gold, but with a plain edge; a similar coin, with a lettered edge, dated 1663, fetches the sum of £255, and was formerly the property of the Duchess of Beaufort.



INGOT MONEY (CHINA)

Some of the coinage of the Eastern heathen take very

ludicrous forms, both as to size and shape. Not the least curious is the Kapang piece in lead, which comes from Malay, and which is in the eccentric shape of a native hat. The heavy Swedish money of Necessity is also of great interest, of which the larger size is twelve inches square, and weighs about a hundred ounces. One can imagine the difficulty of dealing with small change in current coin of this description. The peasants have evidently felt the restrictions themselves, for now they are solely used for baking purposes in the cottages.

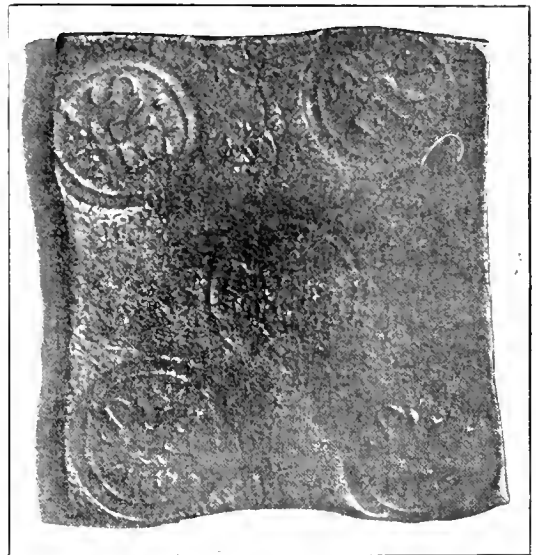


BRATTEALF (ZURICH)



CHINESE FISHHOOK MONEY

Our American cousins, with their zest for everything large, buy up as many of these as they can lay their hands upon, so that probably in the near future there will not be many left in British hands. In direct contrast to this massive currency are the Braeteates, which are the thinnest coins



SWEDISH HALF-DUCATE

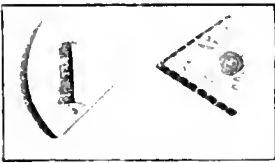
A CHAT ON COINS.



GERMAN HALF-DOLLAR

being made on one side; they were struck mostly in Germany, the Low Countries, and Switzerland, the best examples known being those of the tenth and twelfth centuries, from Brunswick, Magdeburg, Nuremberg, Zurich, Bale, St. Gall, &c. Another strange type is the silver fish-hook money, with which the Cingalese conducted their bartering. It took

INDIAN CURRENCY COIN



INDIAN CURRENCY COIN

a stamped device. The latter varied according to caprice or the fancy of the coiner, but the silver is the purest and finest; indeed, if any suspicion attached to a coin, it was tested in the fiercest heat, and if it did not come out of the ordeal an unblemished white, it was reckoned as not being current money. Two other examples coming from the same latitudes are the Siamese bars of silver, stamped on every side, and the Chinese beat-money, which was formed by metal being run into a mould the shape of a craft, and weighing up to twelve ounces.

One of the most curious methods of supplying a deficiency in the exchequer was that adopted by our British Colonies about the opening of the century. This device was to cut ordinary silver coins into halves, eighths, and sixteenths. Thus the dollar was dissected into five divisions, of one-fifth



BRITISH COLONIAL COIN

each, and re-stamped as new coins. These practices occurred in St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Tobago, Tortola, and the Virgin Islands; in Guadeloupe it was only cut into three pieces. The simple folk of Trinidad had a yet deeper system of supplying a deficient exchequer. The centre



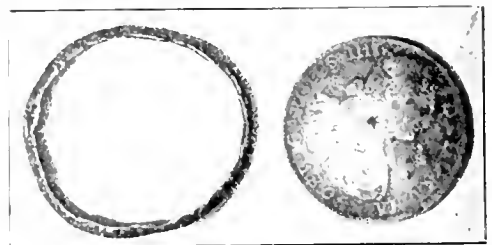
TRINIDAD COIN

of the dollar and a T was stamped upon it (or D for St. Dominica), it was then crenated on the edge, and was reckoned of the value of one and threepence, while the outer ring was worth five shillings. In this way six shillings and threepence were made out of a four-shilling piece. The same practice was carried on in New South Wales, the general name being the Holy dollar. These defaced coins are extremely rare.



MASSACHUSETTS AND NEW ENGLAND COIN

Some pieces of money, which have acquired a large price, are the Massachusetts and New England pieces. The latter is of plain silver, with N.E., and the former has a pine or oak tree for device, and the value of the New England piece is about ten pounds. The Massachusetts coins range from a shilling down to a penny, the last being of the highest rarity.



NEW ENGLAND COIN

Another class of coin which has become costly on account of its rarity is the portucullis money, which was struck for currency in India, in the days of Good Queen Bess.

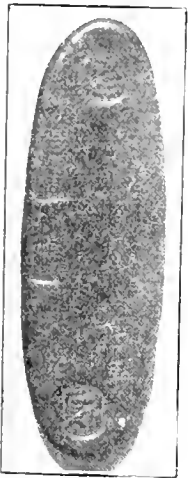


VICTORIA DECIMAL PENNY

They are known as sixpenny, shilling, half-crown, and five-shilling pieces, although they are struck to the respective weights of the Spanish Piaster, half, quarter and eighth.

Two more specimens, of which we give illustrations, are the Siamese Ticals, or bullet-money, which are formed in sets of nine; they are frequently used as buttons, and vary in dimension from the size of a plum to that of a pill. The other is the Siamese Ingot money; this is formed in long bars of silver, and is stamped in native characters on every side.

Messrs. Spink have preserved in a bulky catalogue that portion of the Montague collection which the great collector found it necessary to dispose of when his huge stock became unmanageable. Among the more



SIAMESE INGOT.

noticeable of these Georgian pieces is a pattern crown of 1829, by Wyon, with the best known medallie likeness of the "first gentleman in Europe." The reverse has the royal arms in plain square shield, surrounded by the collar of the Garter, upon a rich ermine mantle. It is surmounted by the Crown, with St. George pendant below. This coin

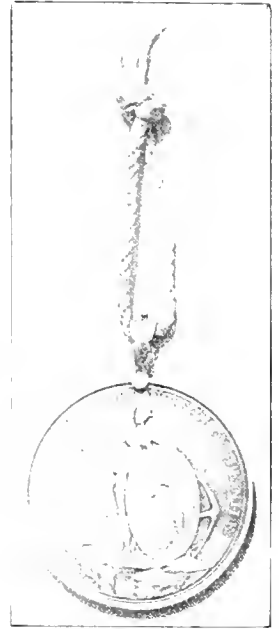
has an almost priceless value.

Another specimen we give belongs to his predecessor — a pattern "Standard" guinea of the year 1813, by Louis Pingo, being a perfect specimen, and of great rarity.

The last specimen we give from this collection is the pattern decimal penny, of the present reign, dated 1859. This was never published, and as it is

neither in the British Museum or the Mint collections, its intrinsic worth has risen in proportion.

A remarkable souvenir was shown me ere I left, and although it does not rightly belong to this article, the rejoicings which were then being made to celebrate the great victory of Trafalgar induce me to include an illustration of it amongst the rest. This is the "Davison" gold medal, presented to Lord Nelson for his victory over the French fleet at the Battle of the Nile. The post-captains had similar medals, silver ones being given to the lieutenants, bronze-gilt to petty officers, and bronze to seamen and marines. On the obverse stands a female figure upon a



DAVISON'S GOLD MEDAL FOR THE NILE.



GEORGE IV. PATTERN CROWN.

rock; in her right hand she holds an olive-branch, on her left a shield bearing the bust of Nelson. On the ground behind the figure is an anchor, with the sea in the distance. The legend runs REAR-ADMIRAL, LORD NELSON OF THE NILE, and on the shield EUROPE'S HOPE AND BRITAIN'S GLORY.

The reverse shows the British fleet in Aboukir Bay, and the legend is ALMIGHTY GOD HAS BLESSED HIS MAJESTY'S ARMS.

It is a melancholy fact that this tribute to our first seaman should be awaiting a purchaser; but so it is, and not even the paltry price of two hundred guineas has tempted the patriotism of Englishmen. It seems strange that the Government itself has not stepped in and secured this souvenir of one of England's greatest victories. It is certainly more suited to a national institution than to be buried away in a private collection. Let us hope that the attention of our Ministers may be called to the tardy recognition of Nelson's claim on English people.

THE GROSVENOR LIFE SCHOOL.

As its name implies, the Grosvenor Studio is devoted principally to the study of drawing and painting from the nude model, and forms, as Mr. Donne calls it, "A Parisian Studio in London." Some years back the young artist, particularly if a girl, was bound to go to Paris or abroad to gain the necessary study unobtainable in London. Now, happily, that is no longer the case, and many are the Studios open to the aspiring student. That these are fully appreciated is shown by the number of art students who flock within their walls; of course, many fall by the wayside and wander off into other paths (and fortunately so, too, else we should be overrun with artists), and though perhaps it is wrong to say so, it is not always a case of the survival of the fittest, for "Luck," as in all other ways of this world, plays her part in art. But there is no doubt a thorough knowledge and

solid perseverance, mixed with ambition, will often outstrip the fickle goddess, and it is this thorough knowledge that Mr. Donne strives to give to his students; and in the large Studio by Vauxhall Bridge there is an atmosphere of seriousness which affects even the waverers. There, untrammelled by conventionalities, the student, as soon as she can draw fairly accurately from still-life, is put to work at the figure. The drawings which are done in charcoal, oh! most delightful medium, are full length, and often two or three are done in a day at the early stage, thereby giving assurance and style to rapidly executed drawings, the great aim being to indicate the pose and action of the figure by broad effects of masses of light and shade. When the student has attained a certain amount of assurance she is allowed to carry her work further, and often the studies done are life-size, both in charcoal and paint; the painting is done on broad lines and slightly impressionist in style. The hours of work are from ten till four o'clock every day except Saturday; when working from a draped model, great care has to be observed not to lose the form of the limbs under the drapery.

Another splendid exercise done for the sake of the study of action, is a five minutes pose which takes place daily, and which after-



STUDY BY C. E. GODWIN.

wards the students have to draw from memory. This practice of memory-drawing is most useful, especially to illustrators, and as black and white for reproduction is made a special feature of the School work, it is greatly appreciated; already several students from this comparatively young Studio are making a name for themselves among the ever increasing army of black and white artists. The composition classes which are held every Friday are also of great assistance to them. At these classes the work, which is done at home, is criticised and a fresh subject given. When I visited the Grosvenor Studio, Miss Godwin, the Secretary, showed me several of these composition sketches, and they seemed to embrace almost every subject from Classical aspirations to a poster, and very good indeed some of them were—a few being in pastel, which is also used as a medium here; modelling in clay is included in the school working, and it is a splendid practice too little used by the general art student, for it gives such a thorough knowledge of the formation and shape of the muscles of the figure, whether in action or repose, and in clay you can build the figure up and drape it afterwards, if a draped study be desired. During the Spring and Summer months Mr. Donne arranges out-door classes for Landscape Painting from nature, and there is no need to go far from London to get charming studies, even the Parks are full of pleasing effects, if it were not for the small boys who will crowd round and make remarks. Of course they appear in the country, but there is a difference between them, and sometimes their criticisms are quite useful, though occasionally they flatter the artist. I remember once painting a study with three children on a bridge, they were very tiny in the sketch, but the village critics all recognised them; I did not, except that one had bare knees, for his stockings were coming down, and when I objected to his pulling them up, the other two wanted to push theirs down, too. Oh, how close that admiring crowd of children would come, and the weather was so hot.



STUDY BY E. M. TURNER.

But I fear this is wandering very far from the Grosvenor Studio or its sketching ground, where Mr. Donne sometimes arranges to have a model so that the Students may study the invaluable 'plein air' effects.

I must give a word or two about the Studio itself, for it so deserves it; first, it is in a most "get-at-able" spot, only a few minutes walk from Vauxhall Station and about five minutes by the tram from Victoria. The Studio has a very good light and the model throne is in the centre, so that the students have plenty of room and can obtain several different views; through the curtains at the end opposite the door is seen a stairway, just a trifle dark till you get used to it, and the stair leads to a balcony which runs round three sides of the Studio, here are many of the students' studies, and here it was I saw the composition sketches, and on the staircase we passed a room whence came the pleasant odour of tea and cakes. Why is it there is always something so nice about Studio-tea?

MAUD J. VYSE.



O N THINGS IN GENERAL.

"I HAVE never seen the Lord Mayor's show," said the bride.

"Neither have I," said Cousin May; "it is one of those things one is always going to see next year. You have seen it, of course, Aunt Margaret?"

"Oh, yes, of course," said the chaperon. "By the time one has reached my age one has always happened to see it—been invited by someone who has taken rooms on the route, or made a special effort for the benefit of friends from the country. It is a thing everyone ought to see once; but you young people had better not leave the sight of it to chance, for fear the show is done away with before the chance comes."

"It would be a pity if it were; we have so few institutions in England that are either picturesque or funny, and the Lord Mayor's show is both," said Cousin May. "I don't mean to be disrespectful to it; it is only funny as some of the pictures in the National Gallery are funny because they are so incongruous. The Lord Mayor's Show is the memory of dignified burgess London come back to walk about on wood pavements, among the newspaper boys."

"Now, what in the world," asked the girl of three seasons, "does she mean by dignified burgess London?"

"I know," said the younger sister; "I have just been learning all about it. The merchants and traders of London were very grand and stately long ago. They stood on

their dignity, and kings were afraid of them sometimes, when they were bad kings. They weren't a bit like shopkeepers are now. I wonder why?"

"I have been reading about them in 'The Last of the Barons,'" said the debutante. "The merchants are very dignified in that book, quite as picturesque as the nobles. No one looked down on them."

"Naturally," said the chaperon, "they had their place in the country, and tried to dignify that place, instead of trying to get out of it. They cared for their individual honour, and the honour of their friends, and were never in too great a hurry after riches to fail to show care for their unsuccessful comrades. Why should anyone look down on them, even now-a-days, when we have all somehow got into the way of sneering at trade? If we find a shopkeeper who cares more for being absolutely honest and trustworthy than for making a fortune in a hurry, one respects him immensely."

"Even the king was not ashamed to be a wool merchant," said the younger sister, with the precision of one fresh from her textbooks. "I forget which king it was, though."

"The Queen herself is very successful as a farmer," said the bride, "and sells her cattle at a good profit."

"There never was a time," said Cousin May, "when England, as England, despised workers, as workers. That sounds like a bit out of a newspaper article. What I mean is, that it has always been thought honourable to work so long as one worked well and worked honestly; that is to say, put honour first and gain afterwards. It is the people

who try to give bad work for good money whom we sneer at, and quite right, too. I respect my fishmonger as much as I respect any man in London, because he would scorn to sell me bad fish, as much as a true artist would scorn to exhibit a bad picture, and because he has 'no respect for persons'; he is as careful and polite about my little bit of fish for one as for Aunt Margaret's big order for her large household. The ordinary tradesman despises the single person for not being a large family. 'To have respect of persons is not good; for, for a piece of bread that man will transgress.' So we have Scriptural authority for looking down on that kind of tradesman."

"What do you mean by 'England, as England?'" asked the debutante.

"Why, once and again, the minority that is the most conspicuous has gone a bit wrong. But England as a whole is generally right, and sooner or later is stronger than any accidental or imported national phase. Snobbishness came into England with the Hanoverians. There is scarcely a trace of it in history or literature before that time. No sneers at old women because they were old, or poor people because they were poor. The phrases 'As drunk as a lord,' 'Do no work, but be a lady,' date from that time, with the spirit they express. A couple of weeks ago a magistrate rebuked a man who quoted the first phrase, and we have a Queen who makes money by farming, and thousands of ladies, many of them ladies of title, earning their incomes honourably, and no one so silly or so snobbish as to think the worse of them."

"Talking about titles," said the bride, "it is a curious thing that so many titled men are being elected as Mayors now. One always thought of a Mayor as rather a vulgar person."

"That was Hanoverian influence, it seems," said the girl of three seasons.

"But it is curious," insisted the bride. "They used to be tradesmen—dignified tradesmen, we will say—according to 'The Last of the Barons,' but always tradesmen. The Mayor had grown to be a ridiculous

figure in literature, and a vulgar person in real life—in our ideas, at least. A professional man would have thought it derogatory to become a Mayor, and now we have seven members of the House of Lords officiating. May is right, snobbery is dying out, though I think people despise real vulgarity and real meanness more than ever they did, if we may judge from books as to what was tolerated in our great grandmother's time."

"We are getting too dreadfully instructive," said the girl of three seasons. "Who saw the motor car procession?"

"I did," said the engaged girl. "I was part of it for a little while."

"And what did you think of it all?"

"Why, I thought motor-riding extremely pleasant, and that the procession has been ridiculed more than is fair for not reaching its destination in proper order. If you think of it, it is quite impossible for a procession to go faster than the ordinary traffic if it is to keep its order. Why, three people on bicycles find it hard not to lose each other, there is rarely space for more than one to get ahead at a time."

"All the same, I like horses best," said the bride. "Tom has promised me a brougham for next year, and I am sure nice well-groomed horses will look better than an oil can."

"But your coachman can never tell you the oil-can has gone lame just when you want to go out, or if he does you can send for a blacksmith," said the chaperon, "nor can he ever threaten that the oil-can will catch cold if you keep him waiting. I am one of those gentle people who suffer under the tyranny of the coachman, and I shall welcome the motor brougham. Directly the new motor cabs are started I shall go in one, and tell you what it is like."

NORA VYNNE.

ANOTHER delightful reprint of an old favourite is *The Alhambra* of Washington Irving (Macmillan & Co., 6s.) A great

In addition to a full grasp of the work are the numerous line drawings of Mr. Joseph Pennell, with which the volume is replete. Miss E. R. Pennell supplies the introduction and throws some new light on the book. The binding meets the desires of the most fastidious taste, being artistically designed in black and gold.

TRIOLETS.

Gladly we greet thee
Soft breathing Spring!
Merrily, meetly,
Gladly we greet thee!
Ah! pass not fleetly
Who's following?
Gladly we greet thee
Soft breathing Spring!

Hast thou a sorrow,
Spring, Ladye mine?
Let me it borrow!
Hast thou a sorrow?
Weep it to-morrow!
While the sun shine
Hast thou a sorrow,
Spring, Ladye mine?

RUTH YOUNG.

MR. JOHN LANE has associated himself with some of the most quaint and charming books for children that have been produced in recent years; a worthy successor to *The Golden Age* is *Wynny*, by Miss Evelyn Sharp (4s. 6d.) which comes out opportunely at the Christmas season. Readers of *ATLANTA* have long been familiar with Miss Sharp's strong vein of humour, and it will be an encouragement to present members to know that she was once a member of the Reading Union. The book is equally adapted for all ages and will be enjoyed by adults as well as the little ones. Some delightful bits of fun run through all the volume, such as the Wynn gift to the Prince of always saying exactly what he thinks, with disastrous consequences; and the giant who lives in a beech tree, with a spurious reputa-

tion for child-eating, who is dreadfully upset when a little boy discovers and beards him. Like all the books from the sign of "The Bodley Head," the get-up is distinctive, the coloured illustrations by Mrs. Percy Dearmer being something quite novel, and admirably seconding the quaint originality of the stories.

SESTINA OF HOPE.

I stood alone within the silent wood,
And watched with longing eyes the restless sea
That through some far-off gap shone bleak and cold.
"Ah me, Ah me!" I wailed: "for Hope has fled"
"Ah me, all lonely is this storm-tossed heart,"
The yellow oak leaves shuddered at my pain.
"Ah cry not thus with such a ring of pain,"
Came whispering all the voices of the wood.
The oak tree murmured "Weep not," to my heart,
And sighing bent the fir towards the sea.
The while her russet cones down falling fled
O'er sodden moss to hide them from the cold.
"Ah weep not thus, although pale Hope lies cold,"
She swaying breathed: "Although all else but pain
Has flown away as summer swiftly fled,
Leaving the flowers who blushing decked the wood,
To sadly die; till o'er the white-flecked sea
Sails spring once more, to warm them at her heart."
"Rest thee," she said, "poor sighing, fainting Heart"
The forest echoed, "Rest." A zephyr cold
Fanning my weary brow, came from the sea.
My tired eyelids fell, and all the pain
That ever beat and throbbed, the murmuring wood
Now lulled to rest: whilst yearning memory fled;
And lo, brown leaf-crowned Autumn too seemed fled;
The cuckoo's note rang blithely to my heart,
With happy warbled peans rang the wood;
And where of late the sodden earth lay cold
Now sprang the careless blooms, whilst frosty pain,
Who earthward bound them, winged across the sea.
"Tis Spring" the breezes laughed from shore to sea.
"Tis Spring" the brooklet rilled and onward fled,
"Tis Hope, the child of Patience sweet and Pain,"
The fir tree smiled: and all the woodland heart
Seemed filled with joy that blotted out the cold
Of that long waiting in the frost bound wood.
I woke, the wood was dark; but o'er the sea
Through misty cold, the light had not yet fled,
And in my heart, sweet Hope reigned over Pain.

GLADYS SECCOMBE.

A TALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

"IS BEAUTY A GREATER POWER THAN INTELLECT IN WOMEN?"

BEAUTY is woman's especial gift, while Intellect is almost entirely due to long generations of culture and refinement; even in these enlightened ages it is surely evident that the power of a beautiful woman, when matched against that of an intellectual one, is in the ascendant. It has always been so. In the dark days of the past when women's worth and reasoning were but lightly esteemed, her beauty was her strength, her face her fortune. At the present day when she is struggling to place herself on an equal footing with man, her beauty is still her greatest power to be used for good or bad over the hearts and wills of her fellow creatures. Doubtless it is to the opposite sex that female beauty most strongly appeals, for when, since his fall, brought about by the machinations of the evil one and that fair woman Eve, has man been totally indifferent to the charms of a beautiful woman? Among women themselves perhaps. Beauty (for it is supposed that few women will willingly acknowledge it in another), must bow before the sway of superior Intellect, but as woman was in the first place created as a helpmeet to man, it is over man that she is expected to use her powers, to lead him in the right way. Coupled with Intellect, Beauty is indeed a magic weapon to be skilfully wielded, but I think I shall not be far wrong when I venture to assert that in a woman's fair face alone, lies her strength.

MABEL W. AVERAY-JONES.

In discussing this subject, let us remember that both Beauty and Intellect are gifts not to be acquired by effort on our part. Plain looks may be atoned for by care in dress; want of intellect may be partially supplied by studious acquisition of knowledge, but neither Beauty nor Intellect are of our making. They are simply committed to us, and are wielded by us either for good or ill. Which is the greater of these two great powers? Beauty, irresistible to the chosen few, or Intellect, the force that reaches and controls the masses? Is it not true that "Beauty has slain her thousands and Intellect her ten thousands"? The power of a beautiful woman is confined to her individual presence, but an intellectual woman makes her power felt through a thousand channels, such as the press, the public platform, and all the varied productions of the inventor's fertile brain. Of the two sexes, the male is generally accredited with susceptibility to beauty in women, and, doubtless, in some cases the charm of beauty acts where words of wisdom fail, but we believe that Beauty, unsupported by the twin sisters, wit and wisdom, leaves on all minds alike a sense of dissatisfaction and incompleteness. Only as far as beauty is the index of the soul, can we allow it to be placed on an equal footing with Intellect.

— BRIGHOUSE.

SINCE the world began, and as long as human nature is the same, will woman, lovely woman, sway the hearts of men; for she possesses a weapon more deadly, a charm more potent than any which her intellectual sister can put forth. "For beauty is a witch against whose charms faith melteth into blood." An intellectual woman does not as a rule make the

best of her powers socially, losing thereby a large proportion of her influence over her fellow-creatures. She will not condescend to small talk or the cultivation of the art of pleasing, but dwells apart in the lofty temple of her own imagination. One has only to glance at the histories of all countries to see the places occupied there by famous women, whose beauty drew men "by a single hair," lured them to destruction, raised them to pinnacles of fame or dragged their honour in the dust. Would they have been as fascinating, as irresistible, had they possessed beauty of mind only without charms of person? No, surely beauty is a mighty factor in the world for good or evil. Intellect can be refined, cultivated and educated, but beauty can only be marred by man, not made, or improved upon, for it is the gift of God, and as such is all-powerful.

NINA GRACE WALTERS.

If a greater, certainly not a more lasting one, for mere physical beauty, though powerful to attract admiration, is inefficient in retaining it. The reason is palpable. Perfection of proportion, feature, and colouring in a woman appeals to the senses in the same manner as in a masterpiece of sculpture or painting: when we have "gazed our fill" we move on. Man needs variety, and soulless beauty does not vary except to decrease. But the "beauty of the mind," which is feminine intellect in its best sense, is a kaleidoscope of bright and active thoughts. Delicate wit, the mental grasp of trifles "that make the sum of life," vivacity, inventiveness, tact, sympathy—all that constitutes the "eternal feminine"—are instruments with which woman weaves around man a web so soft and bright that he never desires to escape from it and its ever changing hues. Of course the woman to whom most power is given is she "whose lovely soul dwells in a lovely form"; but she is so rare that poets have graced her with the halo of an angel. The beauty which beams through the eyes from the soul is, after all, the brightest, and shines the longest. And it is the soul, comprehending, as it does, Intellect guarded and guided by all the qualities that make up Goodness, that

"Casts a beam on the outward shape,
The unpolluted temple of the mind,
And turns it by degrees to its own essence."

LUISE GOLDSCHMIDT.



ATALANTA CLUB.

Subject for January: "Should wives have regular occupation beyond their household duties?" Papers must not exceed more than *two hundred and fifty words*, and must be sent in on or before January 25th. Prizes of five shillings will be awarded to each of the four best papers, which will be published in the body of the Magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

Describe an imaginary skating accident, introducing four characters. Analyse the chief characteristics of Henry VIII. Write original triplets (example given on page 262). Essays must not exceed 500 words. Subject for the School of Journalism will be a description, not to exceed 1,000 words, of an important civic ceremony, real or imaginary. All papers must be sent in on or before January 25th. Members may only enter for one of these subjects. Full rules for the above will be found among the advertising pages at the end of this number.

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (DECEMBER).

I.

1. In the Christmas number of *Punch* for 1844.
2. That of Keats.
3. In the Protestant Cemetery in Rome.

II.

1. Harribee was the place of execution at Carlisle, and in olden times the beginning of the 51st Psalm, *Miserere mei*, was read by criminals.
2. A piece of linen, folded with five corners, which represent the five senses, and is inscribed with characters. A magician holds out the Pentacle when he invokes.

III.

1. Richard Cumberland. 2. James Thomson.

IV.

1. The Duke of Wharton.
2. A cap of state made of crimson velvet, lined with ermine, carried before a king at his coronation.

V.

1. In a Danish ballad in the "Kiempe Viser," a collection of heroic songs.
2. Ericus, King of Sweden, was so great a magician that he made the wind blow in the direction he turned his cap.
3. Gold coins of James V. with the effigy of the King wearing a bonnet.

VI.

1. Alfred Austin "Unseasonable Snows."
2. Mathilde Blind "The Dead."
3. William Freeland—"In prospect of Death."
4. John Addington Symonds—"To the Genius of Eternal Slumber."

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR JANUARY.

I.

1. What is the meaning of the title "Filea, or Ollanib Re Dan?"
2. What were the two signs by which war or peace were supposed to be anciently proclaimed in Britain?

II.

Where do these quotations occur?

1. "Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind
And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind."
2. "Shipwreck'd upon a kingdom, where no pity,
No friends, no hope, no kindred weep for me;
Almost no grave allow'd me:—"
3. "Neither a borrower, nor lender be:
For loan oft loses both itself and friend;
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry."

III.

1. Who is apostrophised in these lines?
"Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame!
Live! fear no heavier chastisement from me,
And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'er flow;
Remorse and self contempt shall cling to thee;
Hot shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,
And, like a beaten hound, tremble thou shalt—as now."
2. Where do they occur?
3. By whom written?

IV.

Give authors of quotations:—

1. "Lo, all but age is as a speck of sand
Lost on the long beach where the tides are free
And no man metes it in his hollow hand
Nor cares to ponder it, how small it be;"
2. "What of the heart without her? Nay, poor heart,
Of thee what word remains ere speech be still?"
3. "The mirrored stars lit all the bulrush spears,
And all the flags and broad-leaved lily-isles;"

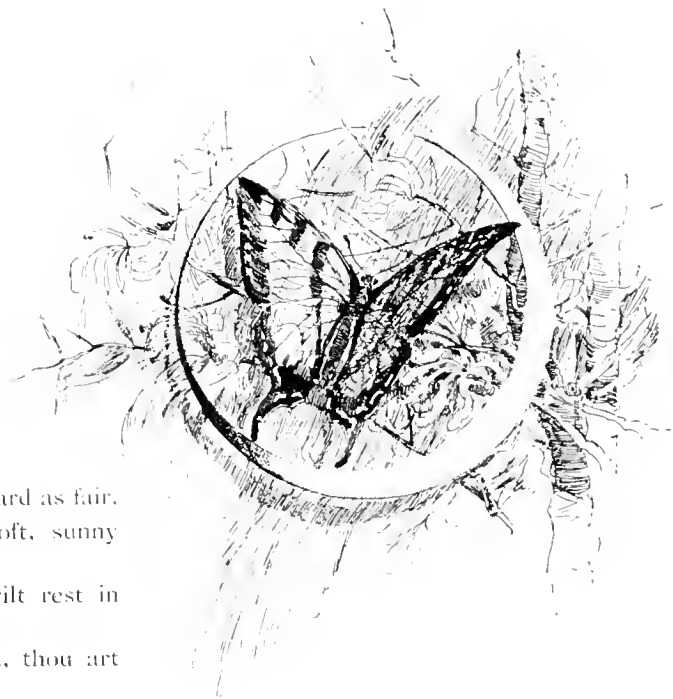
V.

1. What circumstances do these lines allude to?
"That keeps from the dreamer
The moonbeam away."
2. Where do they occur?
3. By whom written?

VI.

1. Find quotations—
"A! what is not a dream by day
To him whose eyes are cast
On things around him with a ray
Turned back upon the past?"
2. "Parting they seem'd to tread upon the air,
Twin roses by the zephyrs blown apart
Only to meet again more close, and share
The inward fragrance of each other's heart."
3. What character is here described?
"Chaste as the icicle,
That's curdled by the frost from purest snow,
And hang's on Dian's Temple."

BUTTERFLY.



THOU wanton of summer, as wayward as fair,
Thy wings ever gleam in the soft, sunny
glare ;
When the roses are sweet thou wilt rest in
the light,
When their leaves lie all scattered, thou art
gone with the night.

My heart was a flower that blossomed in health
And opened its petals to give thee its wealth.
It's bloom hath departed, its petals hang free,
For the store of its love hath been stol'n by thee.

But a web of delight for thy lure shall be wrought,
In the net of devotion thy love shall be caught,
And the wings of thy fancy that flutter so bold
I will pin to my side in a prison of gold.

Thou wilt sigh for thy freedom and fret at the thrall,
But its meshes are potent, though softly they fall,
And so lightly 'twill hold thee, thy yearnings shall cease,
Thou wilt soon love its softness, its shelter, its peace.

O loved one, my dear one, my butterfly sweet,
Nay, droop not and sigh for the glare and the heat :
The nectar is sweeter that true love can give—
Then fly to me, rest on me, in my heart live!

ICARUS.



The Photo by R. L. A. A. A.

A FINISHING TOUCH.

LITTLE MISS LUSTRING.

BY AGNES GIBERNE.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT IT MIGHT MEAN?

"Maud!"

"Coming——"

"I want a word with you. Quick, please."

Maud ran downstairs, and found Hugo in the hall, frowning, and drawing a whip through his fingers.

"Anything the matter?"

"Can you take a message from me to Rosina? My mother is bent upon my going with her for a drive this afternoon, and I have an engagement later that can't be put aside."

"Were you going to the Lustrings?"

"Yes; just off. Rosina will expect me, of course, and now I do not see how to manage it, without worrying my mother. Will you explain to Rosina? You will know what to say."

Maud hesitated one instant. She had her afternoon well mapped out.

"If it is really needful. I can have the governess-cart. Do you think she would be surprised that for once you should fail to appear? You were there yesterday,—and every day this week."

Hugo's frown deepened. "You do not wish to go. Never mind;—leave it. I will send a note."

He was turning away, but she caught his sleeve. "Hugo!—nonsense! I told you I would do it. Of course I will, if you care so much. What shall I say?"

"Just explain; that is all. Tell her I will be there to-morrow. Make her understand that I am not staying away by choice. And—you can give her this."

"A note. Then verbal explanations will not be wanted."

"Yes. I wrote this before, to leave if by

any chance I found her out. I do not suppose that she will be out, because she will be expecting me. After what passed yesterday, she would know that I should go, if not prevented."

For a while no idea had come up of a speedy marriage; and so far as Rosina was concerned there could be no need for haste. But Hugo was older, and his was an impatient temperament. He had soon begun to make it apparent that as little delay as possible would meet his views. Rosina's parents demurred faintly, but they spoke in uncertain accents, alluding to her youth, yet offering no real obstacles; and the girl herself seemed submissively willing to fall in with whatever might be desired. As for the influence of Mrs. Auckland, formerly all-potent, it went now for little. The utmost that she had been able to obtain from her son was a promise that he would press for no earlier date than the end of October; and only the day before it had been definitely decided that in the last week of October, or thereabouts, the two should become one. Hugo's rugged features had been since as jubilant with happiness as it was in their nature to be; while Mrs. Auckland was a personification of gloom. This was why he could not refuse her sudden request for a drive, even though he felt it particularly incumbent on him not to miss seeing Rosina.

"Barely four months!" mused Maud, holding loose reins, as the fat pony jogged slowly ahead. "If Hugo is sure of his own mind why not? but I should have been thankful for a year's delay." She sighed audibly, being alone, and wondered, as she had wondered a hundred times before, how the new order of things would work. Mrs. Auckland had never in her life known what it was to play the part popularly termed "second fiddle."

"I suppose we shall learn to rub on somehow. Rosina is not a copy of her mother, mercifully; and she may take some shaping. But of course she will have been tutored into expecting her 'rights,' and she will know how

to assert herself. If it would not half-kill my mother to leave Hugo, I would infinitely rather live under another roof; but one might almost as well sign her death-warrant at once. No; we shall have to endure one another, as best we may. Perhaps, when Rosina has been here for a fortnight, things may look better." Then Maud tried to amuse herself by picturing the small ecstasies and agonies of Mrs. Lustring, in view of the approaching wedding. "I shall have to listen to no end of confidences. If they would take a little advice, I might save them some useless expenditure in the trousseau line. Hugo may not care now what Rosina wears, but he will care extremely by-and-by. Hugo's wife, in that frock which she wore last Sunday! Impossible! And as for Mrs. Lustring at the wedding, one shudders at the thought of her bonnet!" Maud awoke with a start, to find the cart at a stand-still, and the pony peacefully browsing. "This will not do,"—and she pulled the reins. Then, dreamily,

"Hugo, why have you done such a foolish thing? Will you regret it all your life? O if something would come—even now!—to break off the engagement!"

Presently the house was reached, and Maud shook herself free from melancholy, assuming her usual alert manner. She tied the pony to the gate, and walked across the small lawn. Mrs. Lustring seldom failed to peer out of a front window at any approaching caller, being always on the watch; but this day for once she did fail. Neither did Rosina appear. The front door stood ajar; and Maud, after pulling the bell-handle twice, walked in. She had never done so before, but as the sister of Rosina's future husband it seemed to her that she might be reckoned sufficiently intimate for such a step. Not that she had the least wish to be intimate in that house; still, she could not leave the pony indefinitely long, and a malicious little thought darted up that for once she would not allow Mrs. Lustring time to rush into a smart dress before appearing.

Nobody was yet visible, and, hearing voices

in the breakfast-room which lay at the back, Maud went thither. Tapping at the door failed to bring a response, because the sound was drowned by a chorus of voices within. A lively party seemed to be assembled. Maud quietly opened the door, and stood looking,—herself for the moment unobserved.

All the family was present; and apparently all were talking at once, with the sole exception of Rosina. It was a small room, shabbily furnished, strewn with disorderly remnants, and strongly odoriferous of stale tobacco. Dr. Lustring stood upon the rug, his back to a fireless grate, his legs well apart, his arms under his coat-tails, his large mouth widely opened for the emission of a voluminous "ha!-ha!-ha!" Mrs. Lustring was seated on the sofa beside a young man, who evidently formed the centre of attention; and Rosina occupied a chair exactly in front, almost as if she had been placed there for the purpose of being inspected; while Cecy and Lou, big, awkward, freckled girls of fifteen and sixteen, lounged in ungainly attitudes close by.

The young man himself was, after a certain fashion, good-looking. He had regular features, a pasty complexion, dark hair worn long enough to be supposed to indicate an artistic temperament, lengthy weak hands with pointed finger-tips, and persistent blue eyes shaded by long womanish lashes. "Pretty, rather than handsome," Maud said to herself; and then her brother's frown came to her face, as she noted his free stare at Rosina, and the manner in which Rosina sat placidly enduring the same,—possibly liking it. Was that so? Maud believed that it was. In an instant's flash she had made up her mind that this was the young man, formerly a clerk with a salary of sixty pounds, who had proposed to Rosina, and had been refused, and had since come in for something of a fortune. Maud could hardly have explained why she believed him to be the man; she only knew that she was certain of it. For a moment the idea had such complete possession of her mind, that she stood motionless, forgetting where she was. Then

she woke up to a consciousness of her position, and knew that she had to make her presence known. "How do you do?" she began, and another peal of uncomfortable laughter in the doctor's big voice drowned her utterance. She had not before seen Dr. Lustring in this particular mood, and she did not like him the better for it.

"Ha! ha! ha! that's a queer state of things, isn't it? Ha! ha! You hear, Rosina? Vickars hasn't fixed on a home for himself, because he hasn't yet succeeded in finding a wife. A young fellow with five thousand a year, not able to find a wife! Don't tell me so! Incredible, you know!"

"I wish it was five thousand. There's a considerable deficit off that sum," drawled the young man, staring still under his womanish eyelashes at Rosina, who still endured the stare with no apparent sense of repulsion. She even looked straight at him in return, with her gentle blue eyes, as if feeling kind and friendly, to say the least. A faint glow was in her cheeks.

"Well, well,—say three thousand, or even two thousand. Not many women would stick at that," declared Dr. Lustring, with another discordant laugh. "You're a lucky dog, Vickars. Wish I'd half your income myself. I'd know what to do with it, fast enough."

"How do you——" began Maud again, feeling out of place, and again a peal of laughter smothered the sound.

"But that's always the way. Always—in this disorganized little planet of ours. See a man with a wife and family, and no end of calls upon him, and he just has to live from hand to mouth. And then see a young fellow, like yourself, with no cares and no responsibilities, and money pours in on him like a cascade."

"Wish it did!" responded the other again, lazily. "If it pours in, it pours out again, as you know,"—with a curious intonation; and the doctor became suddenly much flushed. "And then comes the question——"

Maud walked forward. She could not let this go on. Mrs. Lustring's lower jaw dropped,

with a gasp of amazement; but for some reason Dr. Lustring showed relief. He strode towards her with out-stretched hand.

"How do, Miss Auckland. Come in; come in. We're just in our cosy little room, enjoying ourselves with an old friend. Turned up unexpectedly last night. Pray allow me to introduce—Mr. Vickars." Maud barely bent her head in the direction of the young man, who scrambled to his feet, and made an elaborate bow. By this time Mrs. Lustring had rallied from the shock, and was collecting her faculties to steer through quicksands. She came hurriedly forward, while Rosina stood motionless, wearing a look of blank bewilderment.

"How do you do, Miss Auckland? So kind of you to come. We are delighted to welcome you into our household sanctum." Mrs. Lustring was privately resolving to "give it" to that tiresome girl, Betsy, who had this day received special orders to be keenly on the watch, and to show any and every caller, without exception, into the drawing-room. "So very nice and kind of you to find your way in here,—just



MAUD OPENED THE DOOR.

like one of ourselves." Maud silently recoiled from the suggestion, and decided that for once she had been guilty of a blunder. "But this is really not in a fit state for callers, so I think we will go at once into the other room. Betsy must have forgotten."

"Pray do not blame Betsy. The door was

open, and as no one answered the bell, I took the liberty of walking in."

"Betsy *must* be blamed, Miss Auckland, and severely too. If she is so careless as not to answer the front-door bell."

"The bell wire has gone wrong, mother," put in Lou. "It would not ring at all this morning, when Ceey and I tried."

Maud turned to Rosina, not immediately responding to Mrs. Lustring's move. "I have come to bring a message from my brother," she said. "He intended—"

"Yes, yes, but pray come into the other room," interposed Mrs. Lustring. "Pray do, Miss Auckland. I am quite ashamed that you should see all this disorder. Is that a note for Rosina? Yes?—then you had better run away, my dear, and answer it at once. Business-letters"—with a giggle—"ought to be always answered directly. Pray come with me, Miss Auckland."

Rosina fled, note in hand, and Maud obeyed, acknowledging Mr. Vickars' bow with a droop of her eyelids, as she passed. When the drawing-room was gained, Mrs. Lustring lunched into a wordy explanation of affairs in general, to which for some time Maud listened in silence.

"Then Mr. Vickars is quite an old friend," she remarked at length, finding it incumbent upon her to say something.

"An old friend of my husband's. That is to say—yes—we did not see so much of him, you know. Not nearly so much. Still, he remembers the girls as—as children,—and he seems quite interested to see them again. A charming young fellow, I assure you. So domestic in his tastes."

"He does not live anywhere near here, I suppose." Mrs. Lustring had evidently no recollection of having once let slip to Maud certain facts respecting a former affair of Rosina's; and Maud had no wish to recall to her mind that she had done so.

"O dear no, Miss Auckland. He lives in London generally. But really he has no settled home yet. Some day, of course, he will make one. He really is a very delightful

young man; so steady. My husband has a high opinion of him. We should not otherwise admit him so freely into the bosom of our family. I am *most* particular who I allow to associate with my girls; and so is their father. In fact, he is more particular even than me; as gentlemen are apt to be, you know. But I'm sure one can't be *too* particular. You see, I knew Meredith Vickars' mother years ago, and that gives me a sort of feeling of responsibility about him. He really is a particularly agreeable young man."

Maud murmured something indistinctly.

"Ah, yes, I was sure you would feel the same. He quite carries it in his face. And he is very clever, too; so good at his painting. I believe he had a picture in the Royal Academy last year; at least, I know he talked of sending one up. We hope he will marry before long. A young man, situated as he is, really ought to marry."

"He is paying you a visit, I suppose."

"Why, yes,—just for a day or two. He talked of coming next week, but he has made his appearance earlier than we expected."

"Next week! Yes!" thought Maud. "When Hugo would have been safely out of the way. That looks clear enough." Aloud she merely observed,—*"I ought to go now. How long will Rosina be?"*

Mrs. Lustring vanished with alacrity, to find out; and when she returned, Rosina came too, shyly and with downcast eyes. One glance at those eyes revealed to Maud the fact of recent tear-shedding. Maud, being wide awake, not only noted this fact, but intercepted a sharp glance of warning from the mother to the daughter, a glance which resulted in a manifest attempt on Rosina's part to look cheerful.

Maud received the little note, timidly tendered, and gave Hugo's message in full. "I ought to have told you this before you wrote, but you were gone too quickly," she said. "Any message to Hugo?"

"No thank you," faltered Rosina.

CHAPTER V.

A MIND MADE UP.

If there were anything in it—if Vickars were after Rosina, and Rosina were disposed to like him,—could Maud be sorry? She put this question to herself on the way home. Of course, if she had cared for Rosina personally, she would have been sorry that Rosina could act in such a way; but this side of the question scarcely presented itself to her mind. She thought only of Hugo; and even for his sake small cause for regret would exist? It might be better for him in the end, as well as for everybody else. He would no doubt feel giving up Rosina, for the moment,—just for the moment,—but he would get over it. “And, oh!”—speaking aloud fervently—“what a relief it would be!”

She determined to say nothing to him at present, as to what had passed, beyond a casual mention of Vickars, and perhaps a slight intimation that she did not like him. Hugo should see for himself. Any attempt at sisterly warning, too soon, might produce an effect the reverse of what she wished. He would be there the next day, and the day following; and then he would be absent from home for ten days. No doubt the visit of Vickars had been carefully planned to take place during those ten days, and Vickars himself had spoilt the scheme.

She would not risk making Hugo needlessly unhappy, by open speech before he should leave. It would be lost trouble to stir up the mud, only that all might settle down again as before. Moreover, to come before him as in any sense Rosina’s accuser, without ample evidence, would merely stir up his wrath against herself. All his chivalry would be in arms in defence of a defenceless girl; and he had a violent temper of his own, usually well under control, and never lightly aroused. If however it were once thoroughly awakened, people preferred to keep out of his way for a while. Maud knew this; none knew it better; and with all her intense affection for her brother, she was genuinely afraid of him.

Immediately after his return, Rosina would come to the house for a visit of a fortnight’s duration; and by that time Maud might have found cause, either to throw aside or to act upon her present suspicions.

“Not that I can feel very much doubt!” she murmured. “Mr. Vickars is just the sort of inanely pretty young fellow, who might be expected to make an impression upon a girl like Rosina. Much more likely, all things considered, than that she should be able to appreciate a man like Hugo. And if there is any feeling of the kind—if she cares for him ever so little—better, a thousand times better, that it should be known. Bad enough in any way that Hugo should marry one who is not his equal; but a million times worse, if she cannot even give him her heart.”

The thought was fast gaining a grip upon her mind; and she did not see how far it might be simply the child of a strong desire. Again and again it recurred, gathering force with each fresh presentment. “What a relief, if only the engagement were broken off!” she repeated often. Many an undesirable engagement is nipped in the bud; and many a man, for the time deeply enamoured, becomes in later years thankful for his escape. Why should it not be so with Hugo? How far she craved this for Hugo’s sake, and how far for her own, she did not enquire.

The next day she waited with what patience she could muster for Hugo’s return from the Lustrings’; and when he appeared his cheerful voice gave her a distinct shock of disappointment. She had expected, had *hoped*, to hear a sound of depression, to see him serious and troubled. But he was in the best of spirits, and plainly had enjoyed himself as usual. She asked casually if he had come across the visitor, Mr. Vickars. Hugo seemed to have forgotten that young man’s existence; but after a moment’s consideration he was able to reply. Yes, he had had a distant glimpse of him, returning with the doctor from some expedition, just as he was coming away. That was all. They had not exchanged a word. He would not see Rosina next day,

as she had to go for an interview with her dressmaker in the neighbouring town; but he hoped for a peep the morning after, before he left.

The dressmaking interview sounded lame. "It does not take a whole day to try on one or two dresses," Maud remarked.

"No? I understood that that was the difficulty. Anyhow, they are a good deal occupied to-morrow. I shall have time for a drive with my mother. And for anything that you may want too;" kindly.

Maud allowed the subject to drop, realising how little she had to say. Hugo would have to judge for himself, she meditated again. In ten days Rosina would become a temporary inmate of their house; and possibly then the air might clear. A voice within her cried,— "But I do not want it to clear!" She hardly allowed herself to hear this voice, and sighingly thought how thankful she would be when the dreaded fortnight should be over. Yet that fortnight would be only the prelude to long years of the same, and Maud wondered anew, as she had often wondered of late, how such years could be lived through. The home would be changed indeed, with little inexperienced Rosina as its lawful mistress, with Mrs. Auckland dethroned, with herself as a superfluous item, with Hugo as a centre for opposite wifely and motherly and sisterly pulls. "No, not sisterly! He shall at least be spared needless worries in my direction, poor fellow," resolved Maud. "He will have enough to bear without that in addition. I wonder how he expects ever to keep straight between those two. Unless Rosina is an absolute angel, the thing will be impossible."

Rosina might be a long way removed from an absolute angel, and yet she might be a good girl, most sincerely anxious to do the things that were right in her daily life. But she was young, and she could not always see what was precisely the right thing; and her home-folks unfortunately were not well adapted to help her in such seeing.

Maud saw little of the Lustrings during Hugo's absence. She had not intended to

hold aloof, and she went over once or twice but not much came of her calls. Each time she was shown into the drawing-room, whither Mrs. Lustring presently came; and each time Rosina was stated to be out. Once at least Maud knew this statement to be untrue, since she caught a glimpse of Rosina's face at a bedroom window as she approached the house. Mr. Vickars did not quickly dawn again upon her vision; nor was his name soon mentioned. Once in a careless fashion Maud made some slight enquiry about him, but Mrs. Lustring happened to be in full swing of talk—she seldom was otherwise—and the enquiry remained unanswered. Maud could not build upon this fact. Nine queries in ten, addressed to Mrs. Lustring, failed to receive an answer, because she habitually talked too much to listen.

Dignity forbade a repetition of the question. Maud would not flatter either Vickars or Mrs. Lustring by showing the interest which she really felt,—and which was of a kind decidedly *not* flattering, had Mrs. Lustring been only capable of seeing an inch below the surface.

Near the end of Hugo's absence Maud went again, not because she wished to do so, but because Hugo would probably expect it of her. This time Mrs. Lustring did once slightly refer to Mr. Vickars' visit,—as to an event in the past. Maud noted the manner of speech; and on her way home, not five minutes from the Lustrings' house she came full on Vickars himself, lounging lazily along the road, with an air of being very much at home. Again she had the sense of something like deception in the air. Yet when she tried to recall what Mrs. Lustring had said, she was unable to remember any distinct utterance as to Vickars being or not being still in the place. Only a vague impression had been left.

Ten days ended, Hugo came home; and on the day following Rosina was expected.

To say that this visit had been long looked forward to, would be true enough; but to say that it had been looked forward to with un-

qualified pleasure on the part of anybody concerned would be incorrect. Even Hugo's happiness was dashed. He dearly loved his little *fiancée*, was delighted to have her with him, and desired to do aught in the world that she might wish. But, now that matters were drawing to a point, he began to realise what her advent in the household would mean to his mother—and through his mother to himself. A sense of oppression crept over him, and he could only look in man-like helplessness to Maud, as the one being who might make the wheels of life run smoothly.

Maud knew herself to have no such power, beyond certain limits. She also knew in her heart that she had no great wish, even had such a power been hers, to put it into active exercise. She meant certainly to do what she could—in reason. But she could not help Rosina being what she was, or Rosina's relatives being what they were; and she could not control Mrs. Auckland's feelings.

And Rosina by this time understood better the aspect of affairs. Rosina no longer childishly described Hugo's mother as "such an old dear!" She had learnt to feel herself miles apart from the dignified old lady, to fear coming into her presence, to be constrained and bashful under her gaze. The thought of this visit had lain upon her mind like a nightmare through weeks beforehand. Long future years, like in kind, might lie beyond, but they haunted her less than they haunted Maud, because she was younger, simpler, less given to looking far ahead. Her present anxieties were all for the coming fortnight.

What to wear and how to behave, had been the theme of many a previous discussion. On the former point Mrs. Lustring had done her best for Rosina, according to her own notions of what was correct. On the latter point she bestowed much advice, not always of the most sound description.

"Mind you hold up your head, and take your proper stand, from the first," Mrs. Lustring said. "That old woman will put upon you unmercifully, if you don't. She

thinks no end of herself, and you won't be allowed to say that your soul is your own, if you don't look sharp. Don't you be put upon, that's all. You are as good as the best of them, *I* say."

These counsels did not greatly commend themselves to the judgment of Rosina, who perhaps was not in all respects so childish as she looked; and she tried asking advice from Hugo. He kissed the little blonde head.

"Just do what you feel inclined, dear, and don't be anxious. You must not think of us, as if we were a set of ogres, you know. Things will all come right, if you are your own simple little self."

Would things all come right? A nameless doubt crept over Hugo, as he spoke.

"Besides, if there is anything you don't feel sure about, Maud will tell you. Yes, that will be the best plan. Ask Maud. She can tell you anything."

No, Rosina was not quite an angel. A quick rising in her heart spoke of rebellion here. She did wish very much to do what was right, but she decidedly did not want to place herself under Maud's tuition. It was perfectly evident, even to her unpenetrative faculties, that Maud did not like her, that Maud barely tolerated the engagement; and to do what Hugo was now suggesting might mean more than flesh and blood could stand. The very idea made her feel as if she shrank from—as if she positively disliked—her future sister-in-law. Yet, if Hugo wished it!

"I've tried to get what I thought you would like," she said timidly. "I mean—frocks and—"

"Yes, yes, I'm sure you have. Of course, people's tastes differ. But if you consult Maud, Maud will set you right, dear. Maud is a clever girl, and she has excellent taste. She knows exactly what my mother likes."

"And you—" solicitously.

"I! O I like what my mother likes. Our ideas are pretty much the same in such matters. You see—" with an indulgent

glance at Rosina's headgear, "some people have a quieter taste than others. But you can easily find out all about it from Maud."

Rosina had a private cry after this talk, which left her with a blank sensation. It was evident that Hugo did not particularly admire the new hat, with its marvellous combination of rainbow hues; and this in itself was a disappointment. Also, there was the thought of having to be "set right" by Maud!

A chaotic feeling of uncertainty possessed her, as to what she really ought to do under these varieties of counsel. It was clear that she could not expect always to please her home-people and Hugo's people at the same time. But surely now her first aim must be to consider Hugo's wishes. That fact took shape in her mind; and upon it came another. Rosina, in her simple way, had long sought to shape life according to the leading of a Higher Will, to bend her own wishes before the question of what might be her plain duty. If it were right, if it might be the Divine Will for her, that she should put self aside, and should submit to the control of Hugo's sister, —then, hard though it might be, she would try to do it. Rosina bowed her little blonde head, with reverent resolution. Yes, she would do what Hugo had said.

CHAPTER VI.

GREEN RIBBONS.

"Which shall I wear," asked Rosina.

She knelt upon the floor, in the large spare room, opposite an open trunk. The size of the room oppressed her faculties, already overstrained by the downstairs reception.

Not that she had not been well received. Hugo himself had met her at the front-door, and had led her in to his mother, pressing the cold girlish fingers encouragingly. "I am bringing you another daughter, my dear mother," he had said in his deep voice; for though she had been to the house before, more than two or three times, this was felt to be a formal reception of its future mistress.

Its future mistress! That was the thought in the mind of the stately old lady, wearing her best black silk in honour of her son's chosen bride, whom in her heart she did not honour, and seated in the dim drawing-room, where lights had been delayed by her express wish. Rosina had no such thought; for her whole intellect was engrossed with the present emergency, with the dire dread of saying or doing something wrong.

A pale old hand had come slowly out. "Kiss her, mother!" Hugo had said, and he was obeyed. Hugo then had gravely bent and kissed them both, his mother first, Rosina second.

"The two women who are dearest to me in all the world must love one another," he had said. It was a simple thing to say, but not so simple a thing to do. Both ladies knew that; and Rosina had felt the whole affair to be alarming.

They had talked a little, languidly; and Hugo had remarked on the darkness of the room, ringing for lights; and Maud had suggested that, as it was only three-quarters of an hour from dinner time, Rosina might like to go upstairs. She had also spoken of sending her maid to unpack for Rosina; and Rosina had begged, with a note of fear in her voice, to be allowed to do everything for herself. Maud had yielded, and had accompanied Rosina upstairs. After which, Rosina, having strung herself to the requisite pitch, had anxiously entreated a word of advice as to what she should wear. Maud, pitying the little thing, even while most averse to the thought of that little thing as her brother's wife, had responded graciously; and Rosina, with nervous haste, had unlocked her trunk and dragged out several frocks. Now she knelt in an attitude of suspense, waiting for the verdict. Here, however, she was happier than she had been downstairs. She and her mother had done their best to provide for the occasion; and she felt confident of success in the clothing line.

Maud stood looking in silence. A yellow

evening-dress of thin material, short-sleeved, low-necked, and heavily trimmed with yellow beads, had been the first to appear. Yellow!—with that flaxen hair! Then a coffee-coloured muslin, abundantly adorned with ribbons of apple-green satin. Maud shuddered. Next an old white muslin, plainly made, which Mrs. Lustring had endeavoured to prevent her daughter from bringing at all, but which Rosina had slipped in at the last moment, for the chance of wanting it. Lastly, the crowning delight of her girlish heart, a deep-hued coral silk—a cheap silk as its texture showed—ornamented with ribbons of a brighter coral. A faint breath might be heard from Maud.

"Which would be best for this evening, I wonder?" Rosina said, and her first query remained unanswered. She turned with a little smile.

Maud was still silent.

"Mother thought I had better begin with the coffee muslin, perhaps. And then the silk, to-morrow."

Maud lifted the white muslin from where it had been tossed aside. "I should advise this," she said.

"That! O but that is the oldest of all. I had it more than a year ago. Do you really think that the best?"

"Yes, I should advise it. You see—" slowly,—my mother's fancy in dress is particular; and very quiet. She likes people to wear what suits them; and I do not think either red or yellow can suit you well."

"Because my hair is so light. No, so Mr. Vick—so somebody said." A blush flamed over her face, as if she were con-

scious of having made a false step. But what had Mr. Vickars to do with the dress of Hugo's future wife? Maud asked this question indignantly below the surface. Her steady gaze spoke of displeasure, and it increased Rosina's confusion. Another wave of colour came, and the girl turned half away. There was a slight pause.

"I'll put on the white frock," Rosina then said meekly. "Shall I every evening, while I'm here?"

The submission was disarming, if Maud had wished to be disarmed. "Not quite every evening," she made reply. "We can have some little change made in the brown muslin, if you do not object to its being given over to my maid."

"It is very kind of you," murmured Rosina, not allowing herself to think of what Mrs. Lustring would say.

"Those green ribbons might be replaced by something rather—prettier. It is hardly the tint for you. Very well, I will have that seen to. The others

can be put aside just now. We live such a quiet life, on account of my mother's delicate health, that you will hardly want anything so gay as the silk. What sash have you?"

Rosina produced two of radiant hues, both alike chosen as it seemed with deliberate forgetfulness of Rosina's blonde colouring. Maud turned them over. "We will see presently," she remarked; "I will come back in half-an-hour, when you are nearly ready."

Punctually to the time named she returned, handsomely dressed herself in black and salmon. Some pale blush-rosebuds were in



IN AN ATTITUDE OF SUSPENSE.

her hand, and a sash of soft blue silk lay over one arm.

"I think these will do better. You will not mind wearing this?"

"Your sash?"

"I bought it once for myself, but I have never used it. It is yours now."

Rosina faltered some kind of thanks, suppressing the protest which rose within. Maud tied the sash gracefully, and arranged the rose-buds. Then, stepping back to gain the general effect, she was obliged to admit to herself that Rosina repaid her trouble. She would hardly have believed that the girl could look so pretty or so lady-like. Always before she had made her appearance in over-smart and incongruous tints, and the difference now was amazing.

"Yes, that will do. I think it will do very well."

"Thank you very much," murmured Rosina, divided between feelings of gratification and resentment.

The gong sounding, they went downstairs; and Maud appreciated to the full Hugo's first glance of charmed surprise. She knew then that, with all his love for Rosina, he had been worried before, perhaps almost without knowing it, by the lack of taste in her style, and she knew that he was conscious of relief. The alteration took effect in another quarter also. Rosina, in her brown and apple-green or in her cheap coral-silk, would have hopelessly repelled the old lady. Rosina in white and blue, with a shy little flush just matching the delicate rosebuds, made a picture that anybody might have admired; and Mrs. Auckland's eyes went in obvious astonishment from Rosina to Hugo, and thence to Maud.

"Really, things are not quite so bad as I expected," she took an opportunity to say later to her daughter. "The girl looks tolerable, properly dressed. If it were not for her people -"

"They will have to be kept at a distance, of course," Maud replied. It seemed odd to herself, even ludicrous, that *she* should have been the one to smooth the path for Hugo

and Rosina; she who, perhaps beyond anybody, objected to her brother's choice.

"Whatever Rosina may be in herself—and I could like her in some things—that young Vickars is mixed up with her in a way that cannot be altogether right," she cogitated. "I will not act in a hurry; but Hugo shall not marry Rosina without knowing more about the matter. That at least is certain. Sooner or later he must have a hint. However—we have this fortnight to go through first; and I must have a little more to say before I can speak to him. It is not impossible that more may slip out, while she is here." Maud did not admit even to herself how ardently she longed for something, anything, to slip out, which should put an end to the whole affair. "The relief that it would be!" she often sighed. "O for a return to old days! How happy we have always been! Always, till this came. Why could he not be content to go on quietly, without spoiling everything?"

But naturally Hugo looked upon matters with a different eye from his sister, since he not only was a man, but a man very much in love. The "going on," which to her seemed all that might be desired, would to him at this juncture have worn an extremely tame aspect.

Had Maud ever been seriously in love herself, she would have understood better; but she had thus far escaped the malady. She had always declared, fully meaning what she said, that she should never care to marry, since she was perfectly satisfied with a brother such as Hugo, and since she could never care equally for any other man. This was well enough, so long as Hugo had not a wife. Hugo being married, might give to life a different colouring with his sister as well as with himself.

The fortnight slid past quietly, without storms, without even ruffled waters. Rosina, by the fortnight's close, had certainly won her way with them all; or rather, perhaps, with all in the house except Maud, who had done more than anyone to keep the waters

of life composed. The servants liked the gentle-mannered girl, who never presumed, and who always was grateful. And Mrs. Auckland frankly acknowledged that at least she was superior to her belongings, and that in time "something might be made of her."

Rosina was willing to be made into anything. She held down the revoltings of pride, with a resolution which showed more strength of character than she was commonly credited with, and she appealed to Maud's judgment on every dubious point. Her faults of manner were chiefly defective, not "viciously" wrong. She was very young; so much the better for future moulding into the shape of her husband's ways. To say that Mrs. Auckland had begun to approve of the engagement would be going too far; but her feelings were far more tolerant, her opposition was much less active. There were times when she seemed almost to enjoy having Rosina by her side.

Maud still viewed the whole affair with unmitigated aversion, still would have given almost aught that she possessed to see the engagement broken off. Not that she was careless of her brother's happiness; but she had persuaded herself to believe that this marriage could not be for his happiness, and therefore that the loss of Rosina would be entirely for his good.

How much Maud was thinking of herself here, of her own future, of her own happiness, it is difficult to state. No doubt the question of self did weigh with her; and no doubt also she loved her brother intensely, and was anxious for his sake. She could not forget the little slip which Rosina had made on first arrival, the evident allusion to Vickars, and the hot confused blush. Once since then his name had come up, and again Maud had noted a conscious heightening of colour. Why should Rosina blush for any other man, now she was the affianced wife of Hugo Auckland?

Maud lived a kind of dual life this fortnight. One part of her was in kind daily intercourse with Rosina, giving hints, putting aside

difficulties, obviating rubs. The other part was in a state of suspicious watchfulness; expecting she hardly knew what; trying not to admit her own doubts, yet never at ease; longing for aught that might point in the direction whither her wishes lay, yet declining in her heart to allow that she had any such desires.

The last day of Rosina's stay had come; and with the morning post arrived a letter for Rosina, in a man's handwriting. Maud passed it to her, and she opened it, flushing. The weak straggling characters were visible all across the table; and Maud noticed them in spite of herself, noticed without intending to do so. She also observed Rosina's troubled face, and saw her sink into a fit of abstraction. After breakfast, when Hugo proposed a walk, the girl pleaded for half-an-hour's delay. She had letters to write, she said. Hugo unsuspectingly agreed, and she vanished. When nearly an hour had passed, Maud was sent in quest of her, only to find an empty room. Rosina had evidently just left it, going down by the second staircase, and so not meeting Hugo's messenger.

Maud stood by the table dreamily. She wished that she could either put entirely aside these harrassing doubts, or could speak frankly of them to her brother. Yet what had she to say to him? There was little to build upon; and an unfounded accusation of Rosina would not be easily forgiven by Hugo.

The large loose writing-case, which belonged to this room for the use of visitors, lay open on the table; and its top sheet of pink blotting-paper had an untidy look. Maud pulled it out, leaving a clean sheet below. By this move she disclosed two letters, both stamped and addressed. One was to "Miss Cecy Lustring," at Hastings, where the younger sister was now staying with friends. The other, in the same large childish handwriting, which Maud had learnt to know so well, was to "Meredith Vickars Esquire."

Maud was conscious of a distinct shock. She left the letters untouched, and walked

from the room into her own. The untidy blotting sheet was still in her hand; and mechanically, almost unconsciously, she slipped it into her own blotting-book, which was the same size, lying on her own side-table. Then she sat down, to think.

The thinking did little good. She could arrive at no definite conclusion. No reason existed why Rosina might not have to write to Mr. Vickars on some business question, though upon the face of matters it looked rather improbable. If not on business, why should she write to him? Why should she hear from him? Why should she blush at the sight of his writing? Why should she need to respond in so great a hurry?

These questions thronged upon Maud. There might be nothing in them. Rosina might have nothing to be ashamed of. She might be perfectly willing that Hugo or anybody should know why she had written and what she had said. Yet Maud could feel neither sure nor satisfied.

CHAPTER VII.

WHAT IT MIGHT MEAN.

Two days later Rosina was gone, and the household was settling down into its normal quietude, disturbed only by recollections of the fair-haired girl, soon to become an integral portion of it. That night an alarm was sounded. Mrs. Auckland had been taken ill, suddenly and dangerously. Maud had to be called, and the doctor was summoned; but he could not arouse his patient out of the unconsciousness into which she had sunk. It was a severe paralytic stroke, he said; and when questioned, he confessed that, though she might live through it, might even to some extent rally, she could hardly be expected at her age and in her condition to regain anything like good health.

Privately Maud asked the medical man, who was a household friend of long standing, whether the agitation of Hugo's engagement and the excitement of Rosina's stay in the house, could have had aught to do with the

seizure. "You know my mother," she said; "and you know that it has been a trouble to her." The doctor admitted that, in all probability, the immediate cause might lie in that direction. He had not thought Mrs. Auckland looking well lately.

"No, not since Hugo was first engaged," thought Maud. "Has her life been sacrificed for Rosina?—and is Hugo to find that what he has done is not worth the doing?"

She said nothing of this to Hugo, however, for no part of her wish could ever be to render him needlessly unhappy. He looked sad enough already. The tie between him and his mother had been a very close one; far closer, so far as intrinsic sympathies went, than it had been between her and Maud. Yet Maud suffered the most, for Maud stood more alone. If Mrs. Auckland died, Hugo would still have Rosina; whereas Maud would have no one to stand first with her.

Days and nights of anxiety followed. During a week or so Mrs. Auckland was nearly given over; and then she began very slowly to amend. But she could never again be what she had been. Her brain was weakened, her speech was affected, and the whole of one side had become permanently paralysed. Her future life would be that of a chronic and helpless invalid. The post of household ruler was perforce vacated—in favour of Rosina.

Maud stood one afternoon in her own room, by the side writing-table, thin and worn in face, for the long pull of suspense had told upon her. A trained nurse was in the house, still Maud took her share of the nursing. She had come in here for half-an-hour to write a few necessary letters, telling friends of the improvement in her mother. Hitherto Hugo had undertaken most of the correspondence.

Opening her case, Maud noticed an untidy sheet of red blotting-paper lying loosely within. Rather strangely, it did not recall anything particular to her mind. Events coming between had driven certain past facts from the forefront of her memory. A vague

wonder arose as to how a loose sheet should have come there at all, the other sheets being all neatly fastened in place by a band. Then, vaguely still, she observed the round childish handwriting, which was visible as there blotted, only reversed and therefore unreadable.

Maud could never afterwards account to herself for the next step which she took; it seemed so unlikely a step, and yet it was so entirely mechanical. She did it as one does many things in life, without definite object or intention—certainly without the smallest idea of discovering anybody's secrets. Her body was overwrought, her mind was pre-occupied, and she followed carelessly an impulse which arose, not thinking whither it might tend.

As she stood at the writing-table, with the pink sheet in her hand, she turned and made three steps toward the dressing-table, lifting it towards the looking-glass. Immediately it was reflected there, the slanting black lines were reversed, and clear writing lay before her. Dreamily still, and at the moment quite forgetting whence the sheet of paper had come, amused also at the success of her involuntary little experiment, she began to read. Some words were very distinct, others were illegible. Maud did not at first gather what they meant; and when the meaning of the whole began to dawn upon her, when she began to recognise the fact that this was part of a letter from Rosina to her sister Ceely, then in one quick flash her glance went to the end, taking in the whole almost instantaneously, before she had really grasped that she was reading what had not been meant for her eyes. This is what she saw, the dots representing illegible portions:—

" . . . find the old lady rather dreadful, but she is . . . and I . . . do dislike her . . . I am . . . afraid of her . . . Hugo . . . kind in a way, at least I think . . . means to be . . . sometimes I do wish I . . . strange with . . . I try not to think of . . . what I feel, for everything is settled, and it is no use,

. . . you know, and Hugo is such . . . think, Mr. Vickars has written to me, saying that . . . and he wants . . . As if I could . . . It worries me dreadfully, but please, dear Ceely, don't say one word of this to *anybody* . . . would be so vexed, and I can't . . . dreadfully difficult to know what to do . . . Mr. Vickars doesn't seem to . . . promised to tell . . . I have been thinking of him all day . . . wondering what can be done . . . so sad, isn't it? If only things were different! . . ."



SHE BEGAN TO READ.

There it ended. Maud lifted dismayed eyes toward the window, and then she instinctively glanced round the room, to make sure that nobody else was present.

What did it all mean? Dislike of Mrs. Auckland; indifference to Hugo; suppressed longings after Vickars; endeavours to submit to an unwelcome lot;—these at least seemed evident. That a crank in the machinery existed somewhere, she could not question. The difficulty now centred on one point; what ought she herself to do?

"Hugo must know," she murmured. "I don't care what all the world may think. Hugo will blame me; he will say I had no business to read this. And in a sense I had not. But I *have* read it, not thinking; and what is done cannot be undone. Now that I know so much, I cannot let him go on, unknowing. It would be too cruel. Rosina may not understand what she is doing. She is hardly more than a child. She cannot understand Hugo as I do. If I can, I must save him from a lifetime of unhappiness. Even if he is angry, even if he will not believe me, I must still tell him." Then the thought came—why needed she to explain how she had learnt what she had to say?

Maud left that question unanswered, and gave herself no further time for consideration. Swiftly and without hesitation, she went to the library. In ten minutes she would be due in her mother's room, to relieve the nurse.

Hugo looked up cheerfully, till he saw her pale and agitated look. "My mother not so well?" he asked.

"She is the same. Not any worse. I want a few words with you, Hugo. Are you busy?"

"Not too busy for that."

Maud sat down, for she could not stand. Now that she was at the point, she wished she had not made so much haste. It would have been better to think over clearly beforehand what words to use. A dread took possession of her that he might be very angry. The temptation recurred—and it *was* a temptation—to hide from him the means through which she had gained her present information. Under stress of sudden fear she succumbed.

"What is the matter?" he asked, studying her face.

"Hugo, has it ever occurred to you that that Mr. Vickars is a former lover of Rosina's?"

"He may be. I know nothing to the contrary."

"And that she—perhaps cares for him a good deal?"

This brought a change of expression—"Take care what you insinuate, Maud."

"I am not given to insinuating things, without foundation."

"No; you are not—generally. But in this case—you do not appreciate Rosina, and you are hardly a fair judge."

"I should be sorry to accuse anyone of anything untruly; no matter whether I appreciate them or not." His opposition was arousing a sense of opposition in her. "I have reasons for what I am saying."

"What reasons? And what are you saying? Be explicit, if you please."

"I cannot tell you a great deal." His displeased manner almost overcame her, and she had to bite her lips for self-control. "But I do know so much as this—that Mr. Vickars once proposed for Rosina, and that she refused him, by her mother's advice, because he had nothing to live upon, beyond his clerk's salary. I know, too, that if Mrs. Lustring had been able to foresee his coming good fortune, she would have given different advice."

"Nothing more likely. That does not touch Rosina."

"No. But something more has come to my knowledge. I cannot explain to you how. Something which unfortunately makes me all but certain that Rosina would have had him, if she had been allowed. Something which makes me all but sure that she cares for him still—and that she regrets the past."

"If you had been quite sure, instead of all but—What makes you suppose anything of the kind?" abruptly breaking into his own utterance.

"It is more than a supposition. I have—reasons. I cannot tell you more."

"And you expect me to believe you, with no more proof than this!"

"I do not ask you to take my word for it. I only give you a word of warning, for your own sake. You can look out for yourself,—enquire for yourself. If I am mistaken, so much the better. It may be a mere childish fancy of her's, which will wear away in time."

"You say that something else has come to your knowledge. Has it come to-day?"

"Yes."

"By word or by letter?"

"I told you — I could not explain —" Her lips were parched.

"Do you mean that you will not, or that you feel yourself bound in honour to say no more?"

Maud was silent. Hugo waited coldly for a full minute. Then he took up his pen. "That will do," he said. "I have letters to write."

"Any other question I would try to answer."

"No. Unless you can give me definite reasons for what you say, I am only able to ignore it."

"But, Hugo, — at least you will keep your eyes open. You will see for yourself."

Hugo was silent, and she had to leave the room, conscious of having, for the first time in her life, seriously offended her brother. She was still more conscious of the fact, when next she met him. There was a distinct coolness, a marked air of holding aloof, as if he felt that she had wronged Rosina, and would not soon forget it.

Yet, while Hugo was annoyed with Maud for speaking, he could not lose sight of what she had said. He could not shake off the impression of her words. She had inserted the thin edge of the wedge of distrust between him and his betrothed; and he began to see with her spectacles. He began to watch, as Maud had watched. When somebody alluded to Vickars, he involuntarily turned to examine Rosina's face, and in her blush he read confirmation of Maud's suspicions.

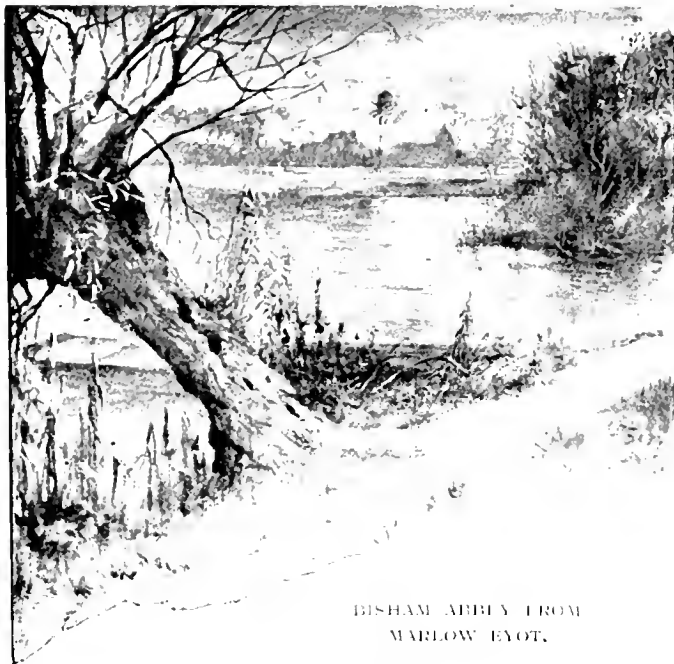
He was not a man to act hastily, or to let himself be run away with by an undigested idea; but the sense of doubt, once implanted in his mind, slowly took root and grew. As the long weeks of his mother's illness crept by, not Maud only, but Rosina also was aware of an unwonted chill in his bearing, which she had never before seen. It is easy to sow

a dandelion-seed in the ground. It is no such easy matter to eradicate, a while later, the out-comings of that little seed. Maud had dropped one small seed into the soil of her brother's nature, and he had refused at first to welcome it. But afterward he had given it judgment, and it had taken root and flourished. In no long time the soil of his manhood might be overgrown with the rank weed of Distrust. He had always been of a frank and straightforward nature, meaning what he said himself, expecting others to mean the same, and ready to give full confidence. If this ready confidence were once severely shaken, the man himself would be to some extent altered by the shock.

To be continued.

THE THAMES IN WINTER.

WHEN your fair partner in the pauses of the dance enquires whether you are fond of the "River," you may safely assume that, in the delightfully feminine vagueness of her query, the "river" means Father Thames, and includes all that pleasant existence which is the happy lot of so many sojourners by its banks, from Richmond to Oxford, 'twixt May and September. For her the phrase recalls golden hours spent floating between broad meadows, fringed with flag, and reed, and willow; or idly moored beneath the shady heights of Nuneham or Cliveden; she pictures many a quiet back-water, where no traffic ever disturbs the seclusion of its languid lilies; or perchance has memories of regatta, or of picnic, when the thunder of the weir was but Nature's bass to the treble of silvery laughter from such latter-day Naiads as herself. One, of course, echoes her enthusiasm, and is at once momentarily raised to a higher plane of intimacy, till, alas, you venture to add that, delightful as the Thames is under such



DISHAM ABBEY FROM
MARLOW EYOT.

circumstances, yet it is almost to be preferred during the winter!!! It is best at once to explain that you are an artist, or a poet, or something equally odd! She will probably ask to be excused her remaining dance with you, but that cannot be helped, it is the penalty of your high and *outré* tastes.

But seriously, how many of the thousands of summer visitors know, or have any idea of the beauty and the charm of their favourite river in its autumn glory, or in winter gloom in frost, and flood, and storm? Few indeed.

Nevertheless, when the thousands of butterfly visitors have, with the swallows, fled to gayer or sunnier climes, the Thames still continues to flow on its accustomed course, still has dwellers by its banks; nay, still has its quota of pilgrims to replace those radiant beings, that all the summer through have fluttered to and fro the railway and the river.

Overcoats and mackintoshes of serviceable build and hue now greet the eye, instead of blazers and dainty frocks; whilst rod, and

net, and basket proclaim the business on hand.

Sober and even grim of aspect are the new comers, and, considering their day's programme, it is only what might be expected. For it is not easy to imagine anything more conducive to staidness of mind and manner than a November day spent on some lonely river reach, in the company of a can of live bait and a few defunct jack and roach; sitting hour after hour, a figure dimly seen through the misty gloom, moored in mid-stream; solitary, silent, Dantesque almost in the suggestion of fixed watching; and truly the surroundings might well idealise a more commonplace personage even

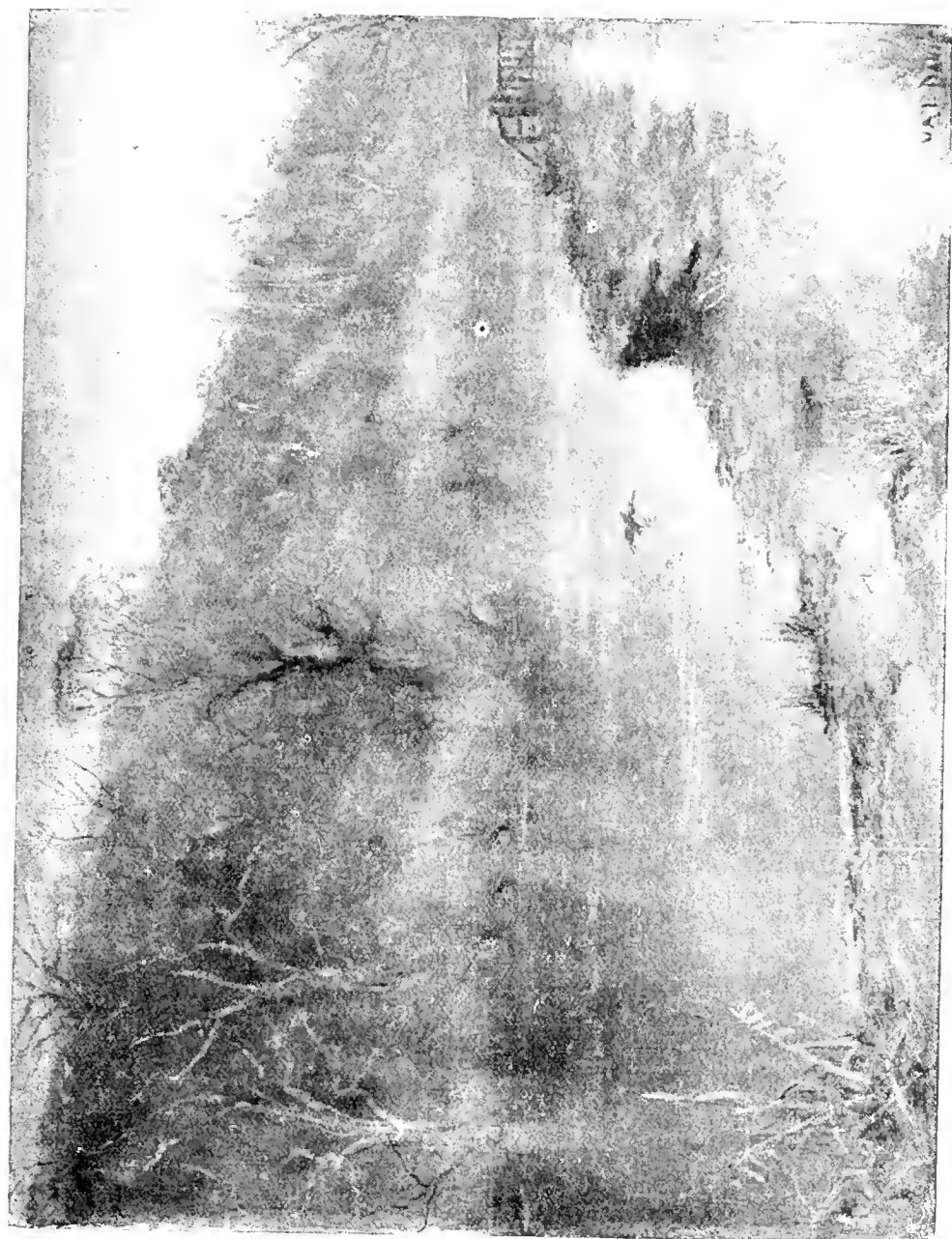
than our friend Piscator in his punt.

For who that has ever walked, say from Bourne End to Marlow, in the gloaming of a November afternoon, but has felt the strange charm of his environment—the quiet wintry sky, the gliding river, the towering woods above?

There is a spell in their mysterious depth of tone and colour, neither blue, nor red, nor purple, and yet all three, which seems to breathe a silence into the heart.

Here and there some mightier oak or beech, skeleton-like, flings athwart the gloom his gaunt grey limbs; whilst below alder, and bank, and bush melt into the dark water, so quiet, yet ever stealing past with stealthy swiftness.

On many temperaments the effect of the soft deep tones, pervading and enwrapping sky, tree, and water, the absence of hard and definite form, the brooding silence, all combine to produce a strange sense, as it were, of walking in a dream, and at the same time an exaltation of feeling nearly akin to the influence of music.



OF MISTY WOODS ON A WINTER EVENING.

And now deeper become the shadows in the woods, more spectral the great oaks and beeches, and round the osier beds come creeping the wan mists with chilly breath; presently a bend of the river, and before us the lock, and the lock-house, black against the western sky, the lock looking so deep and dark and dark, that could our demoiselle see it, it would be with a shudder at the mere thought of finding herself in skiff or punt within its grim embrasure.

The white long line of the foaming weir outlines the quiet pool above, whereon a swan floats, a pale silent form amid the gathering gloom.

At length twinkling through the trees glitter the lights of Marlow town, whose friendly glow even the most poetic and unutterable soul among us must greet with a pleasant sense of home-coming and comfort.

And as we turn our backs on the distant misty woods, the dark cold river, and the glistening ceaseless weir, it is as from some dread presence, beautiful indeed, but like Fate, fixed above, and remote from all sympathy with our small human hopes and joys.

In the cheerful clatter and warmth of the little town, we realise and understand the meaning of Eliot's "sweet security of the streets," and how, in the days of our ancestors, when the world beyond the confines of castle, town, and hamlet, was fraught with danger, they peopled forest and mountain height, moor and marsh, with gnome, and troll, and fairy, with demon and ogre, all more or less powerful, all more or less inimical to man.

At times even we can feel with our forefathers that Nature is but a stepmother, softened though her face may be to us in this modern England of ours. The size of our great towns and their great resources tend to make us forget the mighty forces lying, as it were, in wait for us outside our little domain, till, perchance, some overwhelming snow-storm, hurricane, or resistless flood, gives us a terrifying glimpse of our feebleness and their strength.

And some such glimpses are occasionally vouchsafed to dwellers by the banks of the Thames, when a great flood drowns their meadows, invades their streets, trespasses on the most private and select lawns and gardens, and makes itself equally at home in the cottage and the mansion.

Perhaps the summer has been a very dry one; over the weir in a daily dwindling volume, has fallen the water less and less till 'tis but a ribbon, and its thunder a gentle murmur.

In the reaches the stream has almost ceased: strong and luxuriously tangled are the weeds and various water growths, much to the discomfort of oar and scull; and so, continuously, week after week, till at last folk generally, except a few of the oldest inhabitants, have begun to regard the stories current about floods and their terrors as myths, or perhaps traditions of the glacial period.

Those superannuated fishermen and retired boatmen, from whom we have so often heard of the wondrous heights and depths of the water out on "them medders nigh thirty year ago come Christmas," are now looked upon with distrust and suspicion, but quite unjustly. For towards the wane of the year the winds begin to waken in the south and west, and rain to fall in a hesitating desultory way at first, yet with increasing persistency, though for days and almost weeks the river continues to flow as lazily and limpidly as ever, the thirsty fields being unable to spare any of the copious showers hourly becoming more frequent, till, finally, it is one ceaseless and incessant downpour.

The last visitor has fled incontinently. The lock-keepers report that the river has commenced to rise, and the old boatmen and fishermen are shaking their grizzled locks in dismal satisfaction at the probable confirmation of their ancient tales, and "still the rain, it raineth every day; heigh ho! the wind and the rain."

In spite of all these signs and portents, however, your interest in the floods may



VALDNOVÍK



possibly not as yet be very great, till one morning the maid brings your hot water and the news, that the "baker 'avent been, sir, the water's so deep in the road," when immediately your interest in floods becomes of the most pronounced character. A hasty glance through the window places beyond doubt the general correctness of her communication.

On the lawn placidly reposes a sheet of muddy water, out of which emerge your ever-greens and urns. Whilst the road outside is filled with a turbulent yellow torrent, rushing along in rabble rout, as though eager for pillage and destruction. Later on, by means of boat or punt, it is possible to take a wider view of the watery commotion.

From the bridge, where are gathered many of the townsfolk, the scene is impressive to a degree; as far as the eye can reach, the valley is one expanse of water, in places quietly reflecting the willows and hedgerow clins, but mainly a confused swirl of eddying currents, frequently bearing along saddening evidence of ruin, wrought on farm and homestead, as portions of hay or

corn-ricks, or even a drowned sheep or pig, are swept through the arches of the bridge.

The noise of the weir has gone under with the weir itself, but all the air is full of the sound of rushing water.

Already incidents of the inundation, mostly



OLD HOUSE IN A FLOOD.



A FLOODED MEADOW.

humorous, are being recounted, as, for instance, how one individual, having retreated before three feet of water in the parlour, beguiled the situation from his bedroom window by playing "Home, sweet home," on the concertina; or how a local beauty had improvised her bath as a coracle, and navigated the rapids of her front garden to take in the groceries. One old-fashioned dame from an upper storey was reported, in her declamations, to have blamed the "new-fangled" County Councils and

School Boards for the floods. But the small boys evidently regarded it all as a special dispensation in their favour, and shouted or splashed about, or waded for flotsam and jetsam, as if wet feet and stockings were good for them.

There are numerous pessimistic forebodings as to what would happen if the water continued to rise, which, however, it does not: for the weather changes to frost, while the meadows are still an endless series of shallow lakes, and we enter, forthwith, upon one of the pleasantest phases of winter life. Let those who have only known the corrugated ice of the London parks, or of the suburban pond, think of miles of ice, flawless as so much plate-glass

shallow, so that immersion has no terrors, the air pure and fresh, the very mists pleasant to breathe, the trees and hedges frosted to a fairy-land beauty. Can Summer rival this? In prolonged frosts, the few wild animals and birds that, in spite of gun and snare, still haunt the more secluded parts of the river, are oftener to be seen. One may even be lucky enough to catch a glimpse of the lithe and fierce otter gliding into the water at your approach.

All true lovers of nature can only regard with indignation the ruthless efforts to exterminate this, one of the last of our native fauna, from the Thames, just to induce an artificial abundance of so-called sport for the Cockney angler.

Already gone from the Southern shires are the wild cat, the eagle, the bustard, the kite, the raven, the wild swan, and so many other beautiful and untamed creatures, till, soon, our country will have no more interest, of beast or bird, than a farmyard or a dovecot.

A few wild duck, however, are still left, even on the Thames, to rise with whirling flight from their reedy coverts, and the now protected kingfisher flashes like a jewel through the sombre landscape.

The swan, so crude in effect against summer green, floats a soft harmony in white amidst the tender greys and browns of the backwaters, no longer the formal adjunct with the urns and fountains of some artificial lake, but a beautiful creature owning only Nature's sway.

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With such high argument do we defend our theme, but it is to be feared that it will convince only those to whom already it has been given to know and love the Thames in winter; whilst as for the others, our labour is but vain, and a frivolous generation will still continue to prefer green trees and summer skies to wintry woods and misty days, no matter how beautiful or how poetic. Well, so be it!

VAL DAVIS.

PETER WITH THE FIST.

THE light of the sun at mid-day was splashing upon the grey stone ribs of a desolate country. In the sand strips between, the gnarled trees writhe in the heart, living by doggedness rather than by sap. And in these channels, men, rugged as the rocks, obstinate as the trees, were dragging themselves from cover to cover, drawing a-nearer and a-nearer round about the little hill whose deep hollow is called the Devil's Quarry-pit. Behind them, to the rear of the wedge, which is the Devil's Quarrying Chisel, were picketed five-and-twenty horses.

The men crawled on, with sand gritting in their mail sleeves, and sand inflaming their aching necks, and sand in the pores of their sweating faces. There was no lagging, for murder was in their hearts, and more than this, Peter-with-the-Fist was shepherding them in the rear. When Peter took that place, the rear rank crowded on the front rank, and drove them to the advance. And the foe they attacked had been bed and board fellows of theirs a week gone by, when friend and foe were one Free Company together.

Nothing showed above the quarry-edge, and one of Peter's men, racked with his scramble, put his hands on the rock before him, and, pulling himself up, stretched himself to look over the edge. *Zim sfang*; an arblast bolt sang out of the quarry and tore the flesh of his cheek, and as in pain he leapt up to run, two more buzzed like hornets under his hood and in his neck, and he dropped flat behind his stone. For the moment each man of the line ducked and covered, until an impatient movement of Peter-with-the-Fist set the leaguer forward again.

Soon Peter himself came upon the fallen man round whom the sand flies were hovering. He was of the South, very pale now under his olive, and Peter, remembering that he who lay there was the one man of

the troop who could cook savoury meats and coax fish from all waters to stew them in toothsome wise, cursed the foolhardiness of the dead, and was sad to see him lie there. He was dead now, like most men who had enjoyed Peter's friendship or ill-will, and his captain left him and peered himself over the perilous breastwork. It must have been a minute's space before the watching arblast spoke and struck a white flake of stone from the rock below which Peter had ducked in good time. A better mark was soon given to the defenders, for Peter, taking his late henchman by the waist, showed his basnet-point once or twice over the edge, and then hoisted and shoved until the dead man looked out head and shoulders. A bolt flew by his ears, and Peter, dropping him in a most natural way, lifted him again a yard further on. No shot, though the drooping mark rose higher and higher, until Peter let him fall back in a heap, and jumped to his feet. The silver whistle that hung by a chain round his neck was in Peter's teeth, and blowing shrilly. And

"Up, Peter's sheep!" he screamed, "the last bolt is shot; the hunt is up!"

He was right. As the wolfish flock sprang from cover and raged up the rocks, answering Peter merrily with, "Baa! baa!" no shot was fired. Peter, after looking from his eminence to see that no whole man stayed behind, lugged out his short heavy sword, and scurried up the rocks like a coney, though withal he was a fat man in heavy half-armour and clumped boots. While advancing under fire he had kept well to the rear, willing to keep a priceless life such as his from needless risk, but here was a business that called for the hand of the master-craftsman.

Nothing was seen as Peter and his sheep ran, and the first two found death at the top, hardly seeing who struck them. Long lances struck out amongst the stones like spines of some dread thorn, and bills swept and shore like a whistling breeze. But the third man in was Peter. Now Peter was a cut and thrust fighter, and his straightforward and

earnest work mostly served him well enough, for few will bide without faltering the rush of a very brave and a very strong man.

But when a man ran at Peter holding his heavy sword in the approved manner of a fencer on a castle-green, Peter knew at once the bounds of his own play, and pitching his own sword over the guard of the other he dived, and brought the fencer to the ground by his feet. Had he not pulled the other upon himself, he would have been slain by the spearmen, but in a moment his own men were in and over him, and those two were left on the ground, clutching and striving.

The man above strove to free his sword, and at every gasp shortened it a little in his hand. Peter's left hand was round his neck, holding him by the hair. The other hand was gone years ago in wild Italian warring in Hawkwood's Company. But in its place was the fist which gave Peter his name for twenty years before his death, and for as long after as a brave man's deeds endure. It was a pellet of lead—a mangonel-pellet, lashed to the wrist and forearm, and with the sword-point at his side, Peter cleared his arm and smote his foe on the ear with that same leaden fist. After that it was but to take the nearest sword and strike into the fight which was sputtering out on the sides of the quarry-pit. A two-handed sword struck the last blow as he came. The fifteen men who had held the place were down, and nine of Peter's had followed the five who had been slain by the cross-bow as they crawled up the hill.

Peter sighed like a man who has drunk a deep, sweet draught.

"They were men," he said; "cocks of the game!—cocks of the game! every woman's son of them. I will have a song made of this. I would I knew all their names for all should be in the song, and France and England should sing it. Find my own sword, Philip, and see whether there is water in the pit. Have the horses brought up. If their knees be hurt, one of you shall know why I am styled 'with the fist.' Is it water below

there? nay, I think. Down with you all, it is blood!"

Down in the pit, from the cupboard-like opening to a cave, one of Peter's sheep toppled suddenly into the bushes and lay still where he fell, and above him a lance-point showed for a moment.

"To him—to him!" yelled Peter. "That is Black John's work: the old wolf hath outlived his pack. To him—to him! loo-loo-loo-loo!" And grasping the withered bushes, Peter-with-the-Fist swung himself from stone to stone, halting only at the cave-mouth, from which a long whistling laugh came, and a mocking voice bidding him good-day.

"I have fifteen wolves' skins here," quoth Peter, "and I will curry a sixteenth or ever I quit."

"I have made young mutton of Peter's sheep to-day, and before to-day," said the voice from the hole, "and, God helping me, I shall live to butcher a bell-wether or ever I die."

Peter sat calmly by the mouth of the hole, "I will breathe me a little," he said, "before I go a-hunting. So God help me; who would think that nine-and-twenty good men go to pay for a thirty-shilling silver bowl with a dent in it, and the tale yet lack another?"

For all this battle and murder had happened over the sharing of the plunder of a hapless manor-house, which had lain in their way, when they all went a-plundering together.

"If anything lacks," quoth the man in the hole, "I will pay the shot or ever I go hence."

"That thou shalt—that thou shalt!" said Peter, slapping his knees with his hand of flesh.

"That will I—that will I!" mocked the voice, "but neither I nor mine ever paid our shot out of our own pockets."

"I shall smoke you out," said Peter-with-the-Fist.

"No, you will not," returned the fox in the earth.

"Yea, will I."

"You will not; in this country at such a time. You will not signal with a pillar of

smoke, like Moses did to the Egyptians in Canaan," said the clerkly unseen.

"Yea, will I."

"There is another hole in the face of the rock I shall lie by, and have been nearer choking than that every time I passed a provost-sergeant."

"Yea, will I. Lie by and choke if you will. The smoke shall do what it can."

"No, you will not. Fetch me out. You said you would. Come and catch your death, Peter."

Peter answered the taunt—he rolled over on hands and knees and rushed at the hole like a terrier.

"Loo-loo-loo! Hie in! Hie in!" cried his lieutenant, who with the men ran to ring about the hole. And inside the hole a cross-bow twanged on a high note, and a loud laugh followed the note.

There was silence at once in the pit, a foot of Peter showed near the mouth of the hole, grinding it's boot-toe into the gravel. The lieutenant and a man seized it and dragged out Peter-with-the-Fist. He was speechless and sped, and gasping like a dolphin on the sand, the red blood in his cheeks flickering away under his brown skin. Under his ear stuck the stubby feather of a crossbow bolt.

They were amazed and dazed. Peter, who never slept, who rode and tramped and fought, who cut a way for his flock through every hedge in life, Peter the strong shepherd of the sheep! They snarled and gripped iron, and plunged at the hole, butting their heads and shouldering each other, but they hung away again when the first man blundered back with a fore-arm almost shivered by a broad spear head.

"Smoke him out," said the lieutenant quietly, and they would have scattered for brushwood, when a voice bayed out from the hollowed place.

"Hearken," it said, and they all hearkened, save perhaps one who had knotted a torn shirt sleeve round his arm with his hand and teeth, and was twisting it tightly with the spanner of an arblast.

"Sheep without a shepherd," said the voice, "I will chaffer with you. I have here a silver bowl that cost thirty shillings and thirty lives, and I have somewhat else so precious that you will give all to deal with it."

"What is there that we cannot take from the stall," said the lieutenant, "I and mine? Strike a flint there, one of you."

"So good a thing that there is but one price for it."

"What thing is that? Blow on the tinder, you fool, why do you stay to hearken?"

"Hearken," roared the voice, "and be wise, Arnaud St. Pol. Hearken you, I am here in my hole, I am John of Oswaldtwissel in England. You who know me, will you bargain? Peter is dead, and I will pay you for his saddle and his truncheon. If I give you good worth you shall set me in Peter's place and I will be your shepherd. If you hold my thing not cheap at the price I will crawl out and put forth my tongue to be cut out, and open my eyes that you may darken them, and stretch out my hands to be stricken off. And now will you buy? For my goods are perishable."

"Yea," said the gaping lieutenant, "if there be any such good, surely we will buy it, and if we hold it not of such worth we will do all such evil things to you."

A silver bowl was flung out suddenly, and a man with a body thick set like Peter's, but with a jolly round face under nut-brown hair, rolled out after it from the hole like a hedgehog, and sprang up shaking the sand from him. And the body of Peter lay there very still—neither friend or foe regarding it any more, because Peter-with-the-Fist had met with death at last.

The man from the hole in the rock looked round at the faces of the men who had been his comrades before a silver bowl came to part old friendship. And they looked at him and about him for the treasure of which he had spoken.

"Hearken then," he said, "and very

closely, for the time is short. What thing is worth more than a man's life? I give you yours, all of you—sound necks for stretched ones. I have seen but now from the hole in the cliff-face what I saw from the hill awhile ago. The Vicomte is out and after us. I counted sixty pennons that ring us in, and the country side swarms with archers thick as ants. To the horses, and we save our necks."

The wounded man, still holding his bandage in his teeth, leapt up and ran out of the hollow without a word.

"Did I say true? Is it worth the price?" cried the Englishman. "Peter's horse and Peter's sheep crook!"

But their weapons shook in their hands, and they looked at him with half-understanding fierceness. Two or three drew aside and whispered.

"Sheep without a shepherd," cried John of Oswaldtwissel, "Will you bleat till the wolf has you by the throat? Give me Peter's horse and Peter's staff."

Then the body of Peter moved and spoke in a little whisper.

"Give them him. He is a man. Horse and away, silly flock."

So saying, he died.

And they rushed madly for the horses and for their precious lives. And though the arrows from the following of the Vicomte fell then like a black storm in summer, they won to the horses, and John of Oswaldtwissel led them by cunning ways out of the jaws of death until they came to the waters of the sea, where they cut loose a great ship, and riding and going on the high seas, they came at last to another country. But before he left that place John of Oswaldtwissel dragged into the cave the body of Peter-with-the-Fist. And he closed Peter's eyes. And with somewhat of the plunder of a great house wherein he won a share thereafter he caused Masses to be said for the soul of Peter-with-the-Fist.

E. NESBIT AND OSWALD BARRON.

THE HEIRS OF THE STUARTS.

IN the quiet University town of Munich there is living at the present time a Royal lady whose career is watched with the most devoted interest by a number of people who are known as Jacobites, and who bestow upon this same lady the charming title of the "White Rose Queen."

Her Royal Highness the Princess Mary Theresa, Archduchess of Austria-Este, Princess Ludwig of Bavaria, is the Stuart Queen of to-day, and it will doubtless interest readers of *ATLANTA* to learn something of this gracious Princess, who, uncrowned though she is, has yet so many loyal subjects. It will be necessary first to introduce ourselves to the Princess's own family and to that of her husband, and afterwards to trace back her descent from the reigning Stuarts in England.

She is the only daughter of Duke Ferdinand of Modena, who was the youngest son of Francis, fourth Duke of Modena, her mother being the Archduchess Elizabeth, fourth daughter of the late Archduke Joseph of Austria. When only five months old her father died, and his brother, Duke Francis,

succeeded to the title. Ten years later he was driven from his capital, the Duchy of Modena being then formally united to the Kingdom of Italy by the decree of the 18th of March, 1830.

In February, 1868, when nineteen years old, the Archduchess married Prince Ludwig of Bavaria, eldest son of the Prince Regent of that country and heir to the Bavarian

throne. The ceremony was performed in the Hofburg Parish Church of Vienna, by the Bishop of Brunn Count Schallgotsch: Brunn is a town in Moravia, and the birthplace of the Princess, the Bishop being in all probability one of the friends of her childhood which she had spent quietly in the quaint Moravian *Stadt*. Prince and Princess Ludwig have ten children living, the eldest being Prince Rupert, who is twenty-seven, and who is his mother's successor to the Stuart title; the other brothers are Charles and



MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

Francis. One of the daughters, Princess Marie, is engaged to Prince Ferdinand of Bourbon, and she is, like her sisters, a most accomplished and sweet-tempered girl. Some of their names are so musical there is Princess Wiltrudis, Princess Hildegarde, Princess Helintrudis, and Princess Gundelinde they all sound like the heroines of

fairly stories, but they have possibly been chosen because of their old Saxon origin.

When her uncle, Duke Francis of Modena, lost his duchy, he did not long survive the disappointment, and at his death the Princess Ludwig became the representative of King Charles I. and the heiress of the Royal House of Stuart. How she achieved this distinction remains to be told.

The Stuart Queen is related to some of the reigning European houses, her aunt being the Queen of the Belgians, and her half-sister the Queen Regent of Spain, her mother having married, for the second time, her cousin the Archduke Charles Ferdinand of Austria, father of King Alfonso the Twelfth's widow.

When in Munich Prince and Princess Ludwig reside in the "Wittelsbacher Palast," going in the summer to a charming country house near Sharnberg Lake—"Schloss Leurstetten"; sometimes the family spend a few weeks at the villa "Amsee," a beautiful private property of the Prince's near the lake of Constance. Both the Princess and her husband are greatly beloved by the Bavarians, whose king and queen they will in all probability become, as Prince Ludwig is heir presumptive to the throne of this, the second kingdom of the great German Fatherland. They live most simple lives, being devoted to their children, deeply religious, and doing a

great deal of good amongst the poor, both in town and when in the country. In Munich they frequently walk about arm-in-arm and quite unattended. Both the Princess and her bevy of young daughters are fond of music, and, indeed, of all intellectual pursuits: they lead the calm, contented and happy home life of many German families, and probably no less ambitious woman exists in

Europe than the Jacobites' "Queen over the Water." It is a far cry from Charles the First's days to this year of grace, 1897, but it is necessary to retrace our steps to those times in order to understand how the Princess Ludwig of Bavaria becomes in the minds of loyal Jacobites the Stuart Queen.

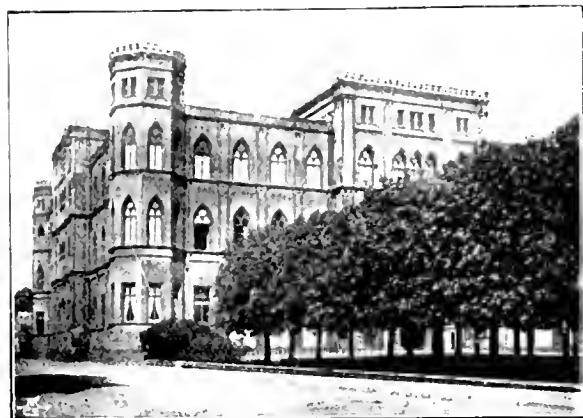
It is not from Charles I. himself that this descent is traceable, but from his youngest daughter Princess Henrietta—her mother's "beautiful dar-

ling," for love of whose exquisite face Queen Henrietta Maria left one of her other daughters* to die of small pox. This little lady was born at Exeter on June 16th, 1644; and perhaps because she came into the world at a time when troubles were pouring thick and fast upon the Royal house, she was from her birth her mother's favourite. Poor Charles only once saw this baby daughter of his, and that was when his Queen had sailed in a Dutch vessel for France, and



THE PRINCESS LUDWIG.

* Mary, Princess of Orange.



WITTELSBACHER PALACE.

he, thinking to find her, entered Exeter in triumph, where Lady Morton put the new-born princess into his arms. For two years she remained in England under Lady Morton's care, then was taken by this faithful lady to her Royal mother at the Louvre in Paris, disguised as a little French beggar boy, and called Pierre, Lady Morton hiding her beautiful personality as a French peasant woman. It is one of the prettiest stories in history is this flight of King Charles' daughter, who rebelled at her rags, and her name—Pierre, and loudly repeated in her lisping baby tones to everyone on the road, "I'se not Pierre, I'se Pinesse." Fortunately, no one heeded her, and the journey was accomplished in safety. Père Cyprian Gamache, who was the little Henrietta's tutor, tells us that the Queen used to call her the "child of benediction." The mother and child, thus re-united, were never again separated for any length of time, and all the warmest feelings of King Charles' widow were expended upon the youngest of their children. Some years of great privation followed, when food and firing were scarce commodities with these Royal ladies; subsequently *la petite Princesse*, as Henrietta was styled, married Philip, Duc d'Orleans, who loved her devotedly. This marriage took place on March 31st, 1661, in the private chapel of the Palais Royal, the bride being

seventeen at the time. "She was," to quote the description of Père Gamache, "of a rare beauty, of a sweet temper, and a noble spirit, and applied herself to all the exercises fitting to her royal degree. She excelled the most skilful in dances, in musical instruments, and all similar accomplishments; the elegance of her person, her port sweetly majestic, and all her movements so justly and tastefully regulated, called forth the praises of everyone who beheld her." After her marriage the Duchesse d'Orleans was not able to be much with her mother, although she frequently visited her at the Chateau

of Colombe, near Paris. On the death of Queen Henrietta Maria, the young Duchesse was prostrate with grief; and did not long survive her. She died on June 15th, 1670; some authorities say from poison, others of cholera. Like her elder sisters, the Princess of Orange and Princess Elizabeth, this Stuart daughter was—

"Doomed in her opening flower of life to know
All a true Stuart's heritage of woe."

She left two daughters—Anne Marie, Mademoiselle de Valois, who married Victor Amédée, Duc de Savoy, and King of Sardinia, and Mary, who became the wife of Charles II. of Spain, and who died without any successor. The father of these two daughters, after Princess Henrietta died, married Charlotte, the daughter of the Elector Palatine, from whom the subsequent Orleans family are descended. The daughter from whom the present Stuart heirs come was the one—Anne Marie—Mademoiselle de Valois, who became Queen of Sardinia. The son of this King and Queen of Sardinia was Charles Emanuel III., and he became King of Sardinia in 1730; in turn his son, Victor Amadeus III., came to the throne, and after him, his son Charles Emanuel IV., who had no children; his brother Victor Emanuel, coming next in succession. Now this Victor Emanuel left no sons, but twin daughters,

one of whom, Mary Beatrice of Modena, was the mother of Ferdinand, Archduke of Austria, father of the Princess Ludwig, the present Stuart Queen. Another digression shows us how, when James III. (the old Pretender) married the Princess Clementine Sobieski, and had two sons, Charles Edward, the Young Pretender, better known even as "Bonny Prince Charlie," and Henry Benedict, Cardinal York, who survived his brother, Prince Charlie, nineteen years, there were yet no Stuart heirs, save this same House of Savoy, for when the Cardinal died, he bequeathed all his rights to the throne of England to the Duke of Savoy, who was his nearest relative. Side by side for over two centuries have these illustrious houses of Hanover and Stuart run. Now closely connected, now severed by less near relationship, and through both the links which have bound them together have come from these Austro-Italian families of Este and Savoy. Another point of interest in this Stuart succession is the fact that it is to his youngest child, and the one who to him was but a baby-stranger, that Charles I. owes the perpetuation of his race, for to all true Jacobites the great charm of the present Stuart Queen is that she is a direct descendant of the Martyred King. Naturally, so famous a race as the Stuarts has ever found a number of claimants to its honours, and there are many families both in England and Scotland who would fain have the world believe that in them the great and kingly line is represented. Then there are always to be found people who give credence to the Albany claim. Of this latter it is quite necessary to speak, when considering the question of the heirs of the Stuarts, Albany being a distinctly Stuart title, and the circumstances which led to the conspiracy having a certain amount of verisimilitude in them. It was made by means of a book, entitled "Tales of the Century, or Sketches of the Romance of History between 1746 and 1846"; the authors being John Sobieski and Charles Edward Stuart. The drift of the stories, for the volume contained

three, was to show that the Young Pretender, Prince Charlie, had left a son by his marriage with Princess Louisa of Holberg, and that the authors of the tales were his descendants. The first story is called "The Birth," and it is supposed to be told by an aged Jacobite doctor, who was living at St. Rosalie, near Florence, and who was called in blind-folded, to attend a lady whom he believed to be the Pretender's wife, because the gentleman who was with her was so like Charlie Stuart, and because she possessed the magnificent miniature of him which she was known to have. The doctor describes the birth of the son, which is placed in the hands of the



PRINCE RUPERT.

(supposed) Princess's lady-in-waiting, and his dismissal from the house in the same mysterious manner in which he had been bidden to enter it, and subsequently he gives an account of the departure a few days later of the Princess, the baby, and the servants in a British frigate, called the *Albina*, commanded by Captain O'Haleam. The second tale is "The Red Eagle," and is descriptive of a mysterious individual living in the Highlands, wearing the Stuart tartan, and with that peculiar look of the eye "which was never in the head of man nor bird, but in the eagle and in Prince Charlie"; he is known as Captain O'Haleam, and says that he is the son of an admiral, who is heir to a Peerage, that he married a southern heiress against his relatives' wishes, and took her name. His valet calls him "Your Royal Highness," and the old Highland chieftains who encounter him greet him as "Prince Charlie." The third story is "The Wolf's Den," and this tells of "Red Eagle" married to one Catherine Bruce, who is called "Countess of Albany," the Chevalier Graeme, her Chamberlain, addressing the master as "My Prince."

By this tale we are meant to understand that the Highland hero is the Pretender's son, born at St. Rosalie, married to an English lady, and that the writers were the Stuart descendants through him. The book was popular, partly for its allegorical charm, partly from the credulity it met with. Ultimately, it was found to be the work of two sons of Admiral Allan, Captain John Allan and Lieutenant Thomas Allan, the latter being the prototype of "Red Eagle," and the husband of Catherine Manning, an English clergyman's daughter. Possibly, after this lapse of time, the absurdity of this attempt to deceive the public on the subject of the Stuart successors strikes one more forcibly than it would have done at the period of its being made, but even then there were plenty to ask what motive could have induced the Prince himself to conceal so important an event as the birth of a son and heir, and by what

extraordinary means he had compelled the secrecy of the Jacobite doctor, the Princess's ladies, her pages, and few gentlemen of their nomad court, and, above all, the assistance of the British captain and crew of the frigate, who would assuredly have been only too proud to recognise and boast of their distinguished passengers.

Had he really had a son, the Young Pretender would in all probability have sent for him to cheer the loneliness of his declining years, for his wife, the Princess Louisa of Holberg, left him in 1780, and for the next eight years he was dependent, to a great extent, on his brother, the Cardinal York, who insisted upon his coming to live near him in Rome, and who did what he could to reconcile the husband and wife, and to influence the former for better, Prince Charles Edward Stuart having, unfortunately, given himself up to a very dissolute life. Like all the Stuarts, he had had many trials, and he was unfitted by them to take his part in the troublous movements of those times. Continuous misfortune begets a certain amount of demoralisation in the strongest, and the misfortunes of the Stuarts endured for upwards of three centuries. Voltaire used to say: "If anything can justify a belief in a fatality which no power seems able to avert, it is that extraordinary chain of misfortune which has persecuted the House of Stuart for so many centuries." And Chateaubriand, a staunch supporter of the Stuart cause, admits that they had every possible gift—personal beauty, rare charm of manner, courage, and great intelligence, and that they only lacked the guiding hand of God.

But Time, which carries day by day under his own fleet pinions the beating wings of forgetfulness, has softened into merely tender memories those men and women who once stood out in startling relief from the pages of contemporary history, and we only remember with Burns, that "Stuart is a name which to love is the mark of a true heart." To-day, in her charming Bavarian home, the last Stuart Queen revives for us the happiest impressions

of her race. I should add that the Princess Ludwig is descended maternally from the Electress Sophia of Hanover, and her grandmother, the Archduchess Joseph of Austria, owed both paternal and maternal relationship to George I.

By the courtesy of H.M. British Consul in Munich, I am enabled to publish the details and the portraits of these heirs of the Stuarts, and to Mr. Murray-Lane, of Florence, I am also greatly indebted for the information about the Princess's family and her antecedents.

LAURA ALEX SMITH.

I N SCHOOL.

IV. THE "DECAGON."

I SUPPOSE it was owing to the composition lectures, that the whole school fell a prey to the literary fever, that term. For the moment, it eclipsed all the permanent and legitimate hobbies in which we indulged, such as, the aimless collection of current penny stamps, in the strange and wild hope, which was never realised, of making a fortune out of them, some day; or the condensing of silver chocolate paper into a large and weighty ball, with no end in view at all, except the unprincipled one of making it the largest and most important silver ball in the school. These, however, were our regular pastimes, and necessary to the social standing of every schoolgirl among us; whereas, the literary fever was quite ephemeral, and the limit of its endurance was that of the "Decagon." And the "Decagon" never survived its first issue. I was the opinion of the girls, that the "Decagon" owed its collapse to me, an opinion I still resent, on looking back, for it would be equally true to say, that, if it had not been for me, the "Decagon" would never have appeared at all. But this was a subtle view that could not be expected to appeal to them; and they refused to allow, with the uncompromising judgment of their kind, that

the real cause of its failure was the sudden decline of the literary fever.

Now, although the head girl and her own particular clique were by no means unaffected by the literary fever, and were guilty of more than one poem, and even, it was whispered, of a novelette or two, it was left for the second class to distinguish itself by issuing a paper of its own. We of the second class claimed, that the girls in the first never originated anything at all; they were too occupied, we said in our envy and contempt, in thinking about the hair they had just turned up, and the frocks they had just let down. Be that as it may, this particular inspiration was taken up at once by the whole sixteen of us, and we all clamoured eagerly for a place in its columns, until Audrey Thomson, who had become editor by virtue of being top of the class, looked hopelessly bewildered. Audrey Thomson, by the way, was not a born leader; she was painstaking, good-natured, and submissive in consequence of which we all liked her, and nobody showed her any respect. So the first meeting, that was held on the subject, was a very stormy one. It took place in one of the music rooms, on a wet afternoon, and all the noise we did not make ourselves was contributed by envoys from the third class, who kept on demanding through the keyhole, what we meant by "sitting up in a stupid room where there wasn't anything to sit on," when there were games of blindman's buff—and the third class—downstairs. The potent truth of these remarks failed, however, to convince us, and we continued to sit with cheerful faces, and some ingenuity, on the shining lid of the walnut-wood piano, while our editor occupied the music-stool, and looked placid.

"If you would only stop talking for a minute," she began, for the third time, only to be interrupted once more—this time by Winifred Hill, who, as a day-girl, at once commanded our attention. The day-girls were never popular with us as companions, and it was an unwritten law that they should keep more or less to themselves.

But they represented the outer world to us, and they always knew when anybody important died, or when the country was going to war; and we submitted to them as authorities on all matters of this kind. And it was obvious that literature, and therefore newspapers, belonged to the outer world, and not to us; so Winifred had no difficulty in making herself heard.

"We must elect a staff," she began, with the air of one who knows. Silence immediately fell upon us, for we had not the remotest idea of what her meaning might be.

"A what?" asked Madge Smith, at last.

"Don't you know?" I said, with easy indifference. "It's what the pilgrims always—"

"*Pilgrims!*" echoed Winifred, scornfully. "Who's talking about pilgrims? If you want to turn the thing into a lesson, I won't have anything more to do with it."

Amid the blackening looks of my companions, I apologised humbly for seeming to know something; and Winifred was coaxed into proceeding.

"You see," she resumed, with a gentle air of patronage, "you must have a staff, to make sure of getting enough things to fill the paper. The staff's the people who write the paper, don't you know; the whole class can't expect to be in it, can it?"

The whole class did, to judge from its rebellious attitude, when Winifred had delivered her definition of a staff; and she condescended to try and propitiate us a little.

"Of course," she said, "everybody *may* send in something, and the editor can take it, if she likes; but the staff has got to write the paper, practically, or else there wouldn't be a paper at all. Don't you see?"

Nobody seemed to see; and Audrey interposed, timidly, and with apology in her tone.

"I think," she suggested, hurriedly, "that Winifred had better be editor instead of me." But everybody objected to this; we felt that nothing would ever be accepted at

all, if Winifred were made editor; and we were just beginning to realise the importance of having an editor, who would be open to the wishes of her contributors. So Audrey retained, with a sigh, the position we all envied her; and Winifred was quenched for the moment. Not for long, however, for she soon had a new idea for our edification, and her own possible advancement.

"You must have a sub-editor, too," she announced.

The editor looked more unhappy than before.

"Must I?" she said. "What for?"

"Oh, to do things," said Winifred, vaguely. "Editors always have a sub-editor, and she has to go round and bully the staff to write their things in time, and all that. Sub-editors have the most fun, really; I shouldn't mind being one, myself. And you can choose your own sub-editor," she added, suggestively, and began humming a tune.

There was a pause. Even the editor did not take very kindly to the notion of Winifred Hill as a colleague.

"I suppose I ought to choose the one who writes the best compositions and things," she said, looking along the row of literary aspirants, as it wavered uncertainly on the slanting lid of the cottage piano. None of us gave her any help in her unwelcome task; we all hummed tunes instead, and looked up at the rain-washed skylight, and the dull, colourless bit of atmosphere beyond; and we made a great show of preserving our equilibrium in our perilous position, and nobody would have suspected that the vacant appointment was of the least interest to any one of us. Madge spoke at last, in the blunt, direct manner she always put on, when she was going to do something that was rather nice.

"I vote for Becky," she said. "Of course, she's the youngest kid here, but she did the best composition in the whole school."

I lost my balance on the spot, and plunged on to the shoulders of the editor, who was sitting with her back to me, at the moment.

Any one else would have felt annoyed: but Audrey only smiled.

"I don't mind," she said, referring to the appointment and not to my reception of it. "She'll do as well as any one, won't she?"

"Oh, no," I said, with becoming modesty, and a throbbing heart. "I think Midge would do much better."

But, to my intense joy, no notice was taken of my perfunctory sacrifice, and sub-editor I accordingly became. After that, owing perhaps to a natural ebb in our wild enthusiasm, business proceeded more peaceably, and, when it came to electing the staff, the eight, who joined it, actually needed persuasion to induce them to take office. For, after all, the meeting had lasted more than an hour; and it was a wet afternoon.

The question of a name revived our interest a little.

"I think," said the editor, with her customary timidity, "that the 'Weekly Record' is rather good."

"But it isn't weekly, it's monthly," objected Winifred, who was not averse, at this stage of the proceedings, to a tussle with the editor. The editor, as usual, was unconscious of her intention. Nancy Waterhouse yawned, and proposed "Our Society Journal," which received no more support than the editor's suggestion.

"Call it 'Strangles' Scraps," cried Midge; and everybody laughed.

"Why?" I asked, in a puzzled tone. But my desire for information was, as usual, misinterpreted.

"Why not?" retorted Midge. "You needn't think you're everybody, just because you have got yourself made sub-editor. It's nothing to make such a fuss about."

"I didn't think I was everybody," I cried, hotly. But the inexorable bell rang us down to preparation; and, for the next couple of hours, the new and temporary distinctions we had acquired in the music-room were forgotten, in the common aim of getting through as much work with as little trouble as possible, and as much conversation as the

inattention of Mademoiselle and our own ingenuity would permit. And, as I sat and laboriously absorbed the names of the great-uncles and god-mothers and other relationships, that exist for the torture of the beginner in the French conversation book, I watched the passage of a scrap of paper down the row of desks, and concealed it deftly under my hand, when it reached me at last. I buried my head in a ponderous French dictionary, and galloped through columns of words, until it was safe to read my missive.

"Will the 'Decagon' do?" wrote Nancy Waterhouse, who had Latin lessons on Wednesdays.

"What does it mean?" wrote I, who did not have Latin lessons on Wednesdays.

"Stupid! It means a thing with ten sides," was the reply that reached me, after the necessary interval. And I, who failed to see how the paper, or the editor, or the staff had any connection with a thing that had ten sides, wrote back: "All right; I will tell the editor after prep., and don't write any more rot, because Maddy is getting so sharp."

Of course, the editor was as agreeable to Nancy's suggestion as to everything else that had been proposed, and as the staff was not consulted at all, the "Decagon" it accordingly remained. And, about a week later, the following notice was pinned up, surreptitiously, in the music-rooms, and the bedrooms, and in any other place that might be reasonably expected to evade the eyes of authority:—

"On Saturday, December 15th, will appear a new and literary journal called the 'Decagon.' The editor of this amusing and literary journal is Audrey Thomson. There is also a sub-editor, and a staff of eight contributors. (N.B.—That is why it is called the 'Decagon,' because a decagon has ten sides.) This fashionable and literary journal will only cost twopence. (N.B.—That means you pay twopence to be allowed to read it.) And only the second class is in it. (N.B.—Please burn this.)"

Needless to say, the editor had nothing to do with this announcement, which was the unaided handiwork of the sub-editor and her boon companion, Madge Smith. Indeed, for the first time, the editor showed a little spirit.

"What's the good of putting up a notice about the stupid thing?" she asked, gloomily. I was surprised at her putting it that way, for I was as yet unacquainted with the attitude of editors towards their own papers.

"That's to announce it," I explained. "You always have to announce a paper, Winifred says, or else no one buys it."

"What's the good of announcing a thing that's never going to happen?" retorted the editor, in the same tone of pessimism. "Nobody has sent in a single thing yet, and we shall all be working for the exams, directly. The botany exam, is on the same day, and that's ever so much more important than the 'Decagon.'"

"Oh, it's all right," I assured her, confidently. "There's a whole week before the 15th, and you can do a lot in a week. Besides, we have got one thing already; Madge has just given me her comic poem, and it's awfully good. Shall I read it to you?"

The editor, true to her rôle, wore an air of gentle resignation, as I read Madge's comic poem aloud: -

"There's a lady we all know as Strangles,
Who's mixed up in all sorts of tangles,
Her fondness for history
To me is a mystery,
That preposterous lady called Strangles."

"What does it mean?" asked Audrey.

"Oh, I don't think it means anything particular," I replied, doubtfully. "But then, you see, it is a comic poem."

"Is it?" said the editor, sceptically. "I don't see anything funny in it myself. And I seem to have heard something like it before. But it will take up five lines, that's one thing. Anything else?"

"Not yet. But I'm going round to wake them all up," I replied, still confidently.

"You don't know what exam. week is," said the editor, discouragingly, as I started on my mission of waking up the staff of the "Decagon." I found that her words were true; any one would have thought, from the cold way in which I was received, that none of them had ever heard of the "Decagon." And, as the week crept on, and none of the promised contributions seemed to be forthcoming, I began to feel a little uneasy myself. But nothing would have induced me to show it. I was determined, and so was Madge, that the "Decagon" should appear on the 15th. Jack's scornful reply, when I wrote him an account of the meeting in the music-room, only made me more determined; although it was accompanied by a copy of *his* school magazine, which was in every way a very superior publication. It was printed and uncut; and it looked dull. There was an article on Christopher Columbus by the fifth form master, and a poem on Spring by X. Y. Z., and long columns of names relating to football matches, and extracts from other papers about bicycling; and I believe firmly that nobody ever read it, except the boys' sisters at home. But still, there it was, sleek and prosperous looking; and of the "Decagon," two days before the date of publication, there still only existed the comic poem, that had not made the editor laugh.

"Have you tried them *all*?" asked Madge, anxiously, as we met for five minutes before dinner, on the 13th of December.

"Every one, except Nancy; and she always scoots when she sees me coming. If we only had her sentimental poem on Love, it would be something." I sighed. A little way off, sat the editor, with a book on her lap, and her fingers over her ears. Clearly, there was no help to be expected from her. "The others are hopeless," I continued, sadly. "When I asked Winifred Hill for her essay on London, she said, 'What essay on London?' and told me not to interfere. I'm always being told not to interfere. It's so poor, isn't it?"

"It's all because you don't know how to

attack them," said Madge, rather unjustly. "You let them see you're afraid of them; and you talk too much, too. Now, if I'd done the asking—hullo, there's Nancy. Now's your chance, Becky! You don't mind if I go and brush my hair, do you?"

Nancy was the same as all the others, only a little worse. She told me she knew nothing about sentimental poems, or love either, and that I was becoming a perfect little nuisance, and that there wasn't going to be a "Decagon" at all. And, leaving her first two statements undisputed, I told myself that there *was* going to be a "Decagon," and that it was going to contain all the contributions originally promised, under the names of the contributors who had promised them, and that they should be written entirely by Madge and myself.

"How about the Botany exam.?" asked Madge, when I unfolded my stupendous scheme to her. "We shall have to write all prep. time, as well as in bed, shan't we?"

"Oh, we must chance the Botany exam.," I replied, airily. "You can always think of *something* to say, when there's nothing else to be done."

So the Botany exam. was "chanced," and the "Decagon" appeared, as had been announced, on the 15th. And half of it was in Madge's handwriting, and the other half was in mine. On the front page was her comic poem; being the only real contribution, we felt it deserved the best place. Following that, was an essay on London, said to be by Winifred Hill. I give one paragraph of it, to show how unfounded was the anger of the real Winifred, when she read it:—

"London is a city on the Thames. It is full of people, and cats, and organs, and schools. I live in London myself, because all great writers always begin by coming to London, Dick Whittington for example. Ordinary people, who are not so great, and are never going to be great writers, live in the country, &c., &c."

Madge explained, that of course she thought Winifred would like to be described as great.

But Winifred said she had no business to think, and various other remarks of that nature, so we apologised for our mistake, and pitied her.

Then, there was a column of "Advice from the Editor to her little readers."

"As we hover trembling on the brink of our exam. week," it began, "let me make a last earnest appeal to you all. Do not linger at lunch-time to eat dry and dusty biscuits, and to drink the milk of the London cow; follow my example, dear children, and retire to a quiet corner with your book, and do not answer when you are spoken to, even if you get called names for it. Why am I top of the class, dear children? I am top of the class, dear children, because I know how to give up the dry luncheon biscuit for the still drier lesson book; if you would all learn to exchange the dryness of the luncheon biscuit for the dryness of the lesson book, &c., &c."

I had been convinced, that so exact a fac-simile of the editor's sentiments and language could not fail to be pleasing to her, but she was just as injured as Winifred; and, for the first time, they had a natural bond of sympathy. My own signed contribution was called "Friendship." It ran as follows:—

"To study friendship properly, we must go to school, and see nothing but girls. Friendship means kissing, and writing letters about nothing at all, and quarrelling so that you can make it up again. Friendship is a very beautiful and touching thing, but being chummy is ever so much jollier. Chumminess means liking the same sort of things, and keeping the same sort of animals, and it means that one of you generally does the faggging, and the other does the other part. But you don't say you are fond of one another, because of course that's granted, and you don't kiss at all, at least not often. It is boys who understand being chums, and the only kind of boy who kisses, is the boy who hasn't got any sisters, I think. Girls don't understand chumminess at all; they

would if they were boys. But they can't help being girls; I wish they could."

I never understood why my views about friendship gave so much offence to the rest of the school. I had only said just what I thought, and it seemed ridiculous that anyone should object to that. But girls were incomprehensible, as I had to own to myself for the twentieth time that term, and it was some days before any of them would speak to me again always with the exception of Madge, who had brothers of her own, and only kissed me four times a day—twice in the morning, and twice at bed-time—which was quite reasonable—for a girl at school.

But, nothing raised such a storm of anger about my head as the sentimental poem on Love, which I had inserted under the name of Nancy Waterhouse. I will give that also, in all its naive simplicity, to show how unnecessary the fuss was. I was ready to own, that there might be too many adjectives for some people's taste; but then, if it had really been written by Nancy Waterhouse, there would have been ever so many more. At all events, here it is:

How sweet is love!
Like some white dove
Dropped from above
O Love! O Dove!
This dove is white,
Is glorious bright,
And beauteous quite
O wondrous sight!
Love waits for me,
As you shall see;
When I'm twenty-three
I'll married be.

I should still be glad to know why Nancy never forgave me for that poem on Love. But, most of the events of my first term at school were inexplicable to me, and none more so, than the cold reception of my first essay in journalism.

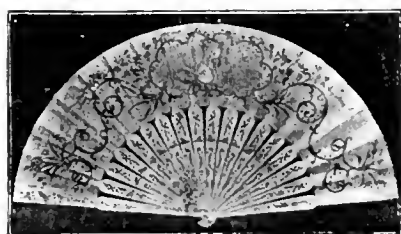
And Madge and I figured, as we deserved, at the bottom of the list in the Botany examination. But the "Decagon" had appeared, as we had promised it should.

EVELYN SHARP.

THE FAN.*

PERHAPS no invention of luxury and adornment has played a more prominent part in the world's history than the dainty trifle which forms the subject of this sketch. Wherever humanity draws its breath, there will it be found. Whether in the seraglio of the far East, where it soothes the smouldering passions of doe-eyed Zelia, or in the sun-parched arena of Madrid, where the senorita waves her feathered zone to applaud the temerity of the supple *toreros*, this "screen of bashfulness" has held its sway in the intrigues, the plots and the passions that have served to make up the traditions of the past.

Sylvain Maréchal has gone so far as to say that "the fan of a fair lady is the world's sceptre." However this may be, it is beyond doubt that in the hands of the feminine adept, this pretty toy forms a language of itself, a kaleidoscope in which the varied hues of coquetry and sentiment are subtly

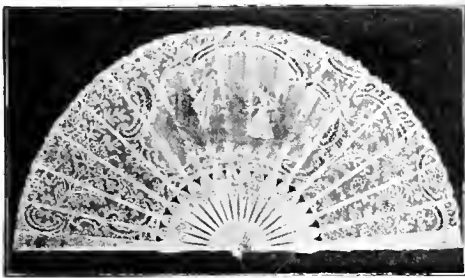


betrayed. When she is undecided, she will open and shut it in an absent fashion; when pleased, she will wave it with a languid, lulling motion; when angry, with a threatening whirr, like the whispering of the coming tempest. Octave Uzanne, in the dedication to Madame Louise—of his delightful work "*L'éventail*," thus eulogises it: "Whether it point the irony of an epigram or accentuate the mocking babble of demure maiden

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roguishness, whether it half conceal the insolence of a yawn born of tedious talk or shadow discreetly the burning roses kindled on the cheek by the brusque avowal of love, the fan in your case is the most adorable ornament of woman, that which sets in relief her refined manners, her native elegance, her esprit, and her enchanting grace."

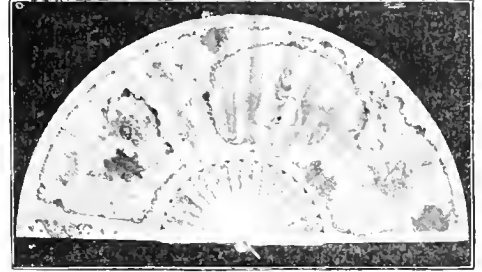
It is uncertain in what portion of the globe the fan originated. One legend fixes its birthplace in China, wherein, long before the Christian era, Tam-si, the beautiful daughter of a great mandarin, being oppressed by the heat, lets her feelings so far master her discretion as to remove the mask which hid her lovely face from the vulgar gaze, and to fan herself with it. The enraptured on-lookers at once caught the idea, and copied the fair inventress, so that to obviate a similar occurrence a regular implement for the purpose was designed. Another legend places the discovery to the credit of a native of Tamba, who, seeing the bats fold and unfold their wings, conceived the plan of making a hand-screen of leaves, which then bore the name of *kuwahore*, or bats. But the writings of the Sanscrit poets and the old Brahmanic fables lead us to give the maternity to the sunny and romantic climes of ancient Hindustan, where mention is made of a fan which went by the name of *Pank'ha*, and was



composed of leaves from the lotus or the palm tree. There was also the *Tchuounry*, or fly-flap, and the *Tchamara*, which was of mosaic work with feathers and a handle of jade enriched with precious stones, to which

a long stick was attached on occasions of ceremony.

China and Japan, however, may be termed the foster parents of the fan, for as far back

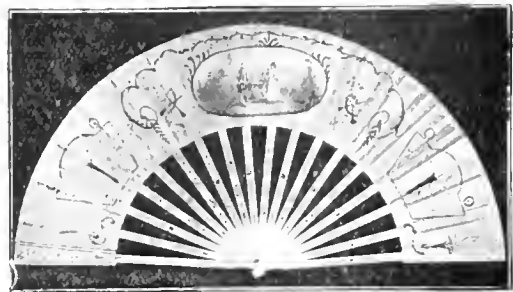


as the twelfth century they were not only used as an ornament by both sexes, but were employed as standards in time of war, and as the insignia of command. In the latter country it becomes a valuable aid to the toilet, and is endued with manifold signs; when folded being a sign of salutation, when stretched a mark of authority. M. Achille Poussielque writes: "The dandies who have neither canes nor whips handle the fan with an air of pretentious guile; mothers use it to send their children to sleep; schoolmasters to punish recalcitrant scholars . . . workmen, who carry their fans in the collars of their coats, fan themselves with one hand and work with the other. Soldiers flirt their fans under the enemy's fire with inconceivable coolness."

Among the people of ancient Egypt the *pedum*, or *flabellum*, was the emblem of happiness and heavenly repose, and was the chief ornament of cars and palanquins in triumphal marches and celebrations; as in China, it was also employed as a standard, which was only borne by royal princes, or by those notabilities who attained the rank of general. From the Western Orient, from the Assyrians and Persians, the use of the fan spread through the civilised world of Greece, whence it appears as a special feature in the barbaric splendour of Imperial Rome. In the age of Augustus the fan was the accompani-

THE FAN.

ment of every style of equipage, that of a matron being followed by two slaves, the one carrying a parasol of linen stretched on sticks, the other, the flabellifera or fan-bearer, a palm



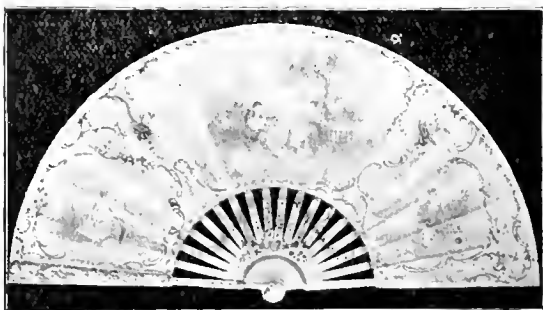
leaf or a peacock's feather to keep off the flies, or to create a draught. Only at a later date does it become a weapon in the hands of the ladies of Europe, those of Rome despising the labour of even such a toy, and providing themselves with attendants, specially destined for this service.

The fashion of the fan apparently descended to the Italians from their predecessors by the tawny Tiber, as St. Jerome speaks of its being used as a mystic emblem to represent the virtue of continence by the Christian Church. However that may be, the flabellum remained an insignia of the Papacy, and was employed for the convenience of the officiating priests as far down as the fourteenth century. But at an earlier date than this there was in vogue among the Italians a fan formed of a tuft of feathers, with handles of ivory or gold, set with gems, similar to the one portrayed by Van Dyck in his picture of Maria Luisa de Tassis. This style of fan was first introduced into France at the advent of the wily Catherine de Medici, who imported a large quantity with her, and disposed of them to the French nobility at a sumptuous profit. Her depraved son, Henry III., among his other effeminate extravagances, "often went into the forest surrounded by his favourites, his pages, and his falconers, with a fan in his

hand, which he played with languid gesture and feminine flexibility," and in this fashion he was followed generally by his courtiers.

In England, during the reign of good Queen Bess, a rich, ponderous style of fan was in favour, framed in silver and gold, and studded with jewels. They were of very costly manufacture, some fetching, even in those days, forty pounds sterling. The knowledge of this gives a greater significance to the words of Falstaff, where he says to Pistol: "And when Mistress Bridget lost the handle of her fan, I took 't upon mine honour thou hadst it not."

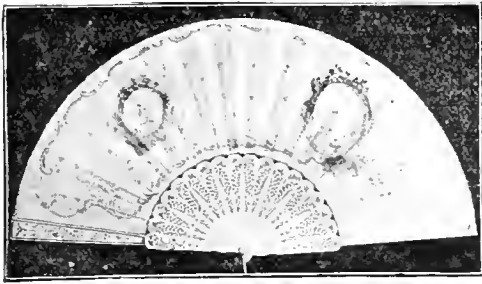
In the 17th century, that age of powder and polish, gallantry and epigram, this ornament was an institution among the high-bred dames of England and France, employed on every occasion, at the confessional, the promenade, and the play. A lady of those days without her fan would have been as Samson shorn of his locks. How would she have marked those little signs of feeling which the fan expressed so ably; how have tapped approval of a smart *bon mot* or concealed a blush at Sir Pomander's sallies? "Was it not necessary to applaud those adorable Italian buffoons; to brandish a fan



at the fine tirades of Baron or to give a little cry, putting the fan shut on the mouth, when Montfleury entered the scene?"

Under that cloak of austerity which Madame de Maintenon contrived to throw over the French Court, the fan became smaller, and more modest in pretensions, to suit the sombre tastes of the day, and it was

not until the regency of Phillipe, Grand Duke of Orleans, that it broke forth into all the butterfly gaiety and license of the earlier years of the grand monarch. In this

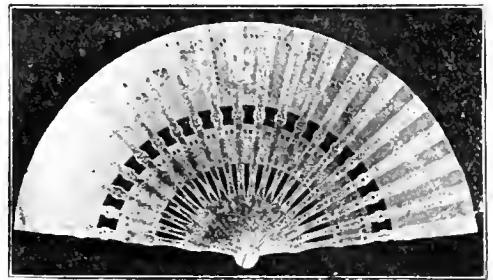


charming period it revived with added splendour, the ladies excelling themselves in the grace and languor with which they handled their plumed toys; one fashion of this day being to have an opera-glass set in the principal sticks, through which the fair one might gaze without compromising herself.

At the Revolution the rich conceptions, the nymph and the shepherdess of Watteau, disappeared, and were replaced by the stern tricolor and cockade on the patterns of fans, the last scene of these dainty trifles being enacted in the Tumbrels, where Madame fanned herself in supreme contempt even in that last ride of death. Charlotte Corday is depicted, in the tragic moment of her life, with a fan in one hand and a knife in the other. At a later date it was used as a sign in the Jacobin plots of the followers of the Bourbons, being adorned with portraits of the late hapless family. During the first empire the fans became so absurdly small in dimensions as to gain the soubriquet of Lilliputian, being only the size of an ordinary mask, and this again was followed by a reaction in favour of the expensive and feathered style.

But it is in Spain, the land of the *senorita*, that the fan is seen in its full majesty. There, the *manejo de abanico* is made to correspond with every glance of the liquid orb, and tells in its subtle movements the

varying passions of love, hatred, and jealousy. No Spanish woman of even the humblest social grade would be seen abroad without her fan; whatever else she went short of, that is indispensable. Theophile Gautier thus writes of this peculiarity: "I have seen Spanish women wearing satin shoes without stockings, but they had their fans; the fan follows them everywhere, even to church, where you meet groups of women of all ages fanning themselves with about equal fervour . . . the manoeuvres of the fan is an art totally unknown in France. The Spanish women excel in it. The fan opens, shuts, turns about in their hands so quickly, so lightly, that a professor of legerdemain could not manage it better." To quote Disraeli in his novel, "Contarini Fleming": "The Spanish lady with her fan might put to shame the tactics of a troop of horse. Now she unfolds it with the slow pomp and conscious elegance of the bird of Juno, now she flutters it with all the languor of a listless beauty, now with all the vivacity of a lively one. Now, in the midst of a very tornado, she closes it with a whirr which makes you start. . . . In this land it speaks a particular language, and gallantry requires no other mode to express its most



subtle conceits or its most unreasonable demands than this delicate machine."

For nearly a century the glorious days of the fan have been under a cloud, especially in our own clime. Extreme crudity or cheap vulgarity have replaced the dainty art of an elder day; nor has the finished handling of the past remained. Maidens of the

present no longer look upon these appendages in the light of a power, but rather as encumbrances, to be awkwardly waved to and fro for the sole purpose of refreshment. But, latterly, in the general renaissance of British art, a successful attempt has been made to revive the beauties that mark the fans of our ancestors. Foremost among these apostles is Mr. Penberthy, of Oxford Street, who has faithfully reproduced many of the best designs of the 18th century. By his courtesy we are able to publish several of these artistic productions, which take us back to the meridian days of Versailles and the graceful coiffes of Watteau's time. Let us hope that the laudable efforts which he and others have made will also restore the lost skill of the past, when the fan was both the substitute and the abettor of the wiles of woman's tongue.

E. TACITUS WILLIAMS.

BALLAD OF A MIRROR FOUND IN AN ETRUSCAN TOMB.

Once, loving hands wrought me for thee,
And chased me with devices rare,
They smoothed my silver purity,
Until thou might'st be mirrored there,
As fair as thou wert really fair,
And as he loved thee, so loved I,
When thou wert near, my night would flee,
And I was fair, when thou wert by.

I loved thy gentle vanity,
Oh, sweet thine image was to bear;
Oh, sweet thy face that radiantly
Shone pale amidst thy dusky hair,
I loved thine eyes—thy deep eyes where
Half-awakened dreams would smile—then fly,
I held their shadow tenderly,
I knew not whence they came, nor why.

Many a long, dark century,
Thy tomb, oh, Lady, I did share;
My life was mate, yet ceaselessly
I hoped for thee, nor felt despair,
Strange hands now steal me from thy care,
And lo! as strange are pressing nigh,
They desecrate my sanctuary
Where once thy perfect form did lie.

ENVOIE.

Is it thy soul that comes to me,
As lightly as a broken sigh?
Oh Love, has Death then set thee free,
Or have I learnt at last to die?

PHYLLIS HAWFREY.

A ANNETTE.

BAH! What had tempted me to leave home in such weather? I never felt in a worse temper in my life. The rain poured incessantly. Of course, there was not an "isvostchik" to be seen. I walked as far as Nevsky Square none there utterly dis-



ANNETTE.

spirited, wet through in spite of my umbrella (which, by the way in my absent-minded way I discovered under my arm, instead of over my head). I passed by aristocratic mansions, middle-class houses, and fifth rate "cabarets," and never met a soul, until I espied a slight black shadow in the distance, and heard a clear voice calling "Isvostchik." Receiving no answer, with a little brisk movement, she picked up her skirts—for it was evidently a woman—and walked quickly on.

She had no umbrella. We were the sole occupants of the street, so I hurried after her. Passing the door from which she emerged a feeling of curiosity prompted me to give a hasty glance at it. A commonplace enough

looking house, closed shutters in the shop below (it was nearly eleven o'clock), a good wide staircase, no hall porter to be seen. Nothing to be learned from that.

"What infernal weather and nothing to cover her head with! If she is only pretty!" I said to myself as I opened my hitherto unused umbrella and redoubled my speed towards the courageous little figure.

Ma Foi! She could walk. I had the greatest difficulty in catching her up. She appeared young, her step had certainly the elasticity of extreme youth. As I came nearer she looked more like a fish swimming against a stream than anything else. If only my Undine would have turned her head! At last she came to a street lamp, paused, and looked down the street. Evidently seeing the hopelessness of finding a "drochki," she lifted her skirts higher still and continued walking faster than ever.

"She ought to be pretty," I thought, as I caught her up, and remarked.

"It is raining very hard, will you not allow me to hold my umbrella over you?"

She turned and looked at me.

"No, thank you, Monsieur. It is useless. I am already wet through."

My umbrella showered a perfect deluge over the dainty little silk toque she wore on her head—such a head, and such a face. Sweet and fresh with the exquisite colouring that only our young Russian girls possess—the extreme cold bringing an indescribable rose-pink to a skin of marble white. I felt I must follow her to the end of the world.

"At any rate, Mademoiselle, let me help you until you can get shelter. This rain is simply blinding."

"Thank you, Monsieur," she answered coldly (yet I fancied I detected a suppressed laugh in her voice). "It is quite useless."

"Do allow me, at least, to walk near you."

"I cannot very well help that." She glanced at the deserted street, with a little shudder. We were passing the darkest quarter of the town, where lights are seldom visible.

"It is dangerous to be out alone at this hour," I remarked.

"I am never afraid."

"Never?" I repeated (conversation once started must be kept up somehow). "Not of being insulted?"

"I have never been, yet."

I felt snubbed, but talk I must.

"Would you take my arm?"

"No, thank you. It would prevent my walking, besides you are wet through."

She was right, the little minx, yet—how lovely her profile looked in spite of rain pouring on it.

"Do you often come out alone at night?"

"Never." That "never" again!

"But to-day?"

"To-day there happened to be no one to see me home."

I felt myself a fool, yet I believed her.

"Pretty as you are?"

"I am not pretty," she looked gravely up at me.

Her eyes had a gleam of mischief in them. Could she be laughing at me? What impertinence!

I made some hurriedly commonplace remark; somehow I could not say what I should like to have said.

"Here we are at the Square," remarked my companion presently, "would you be so kind Monsieur as to get me an 'isvostchik'?"

Delighted to be asked to do anything for her, I called till I was hoarse, and at last succeeded in unearthing two or three, one after the other, who emerged from the gloom.

"You see we can take our choice," I said gaily.

"Which is the best?" she answered, with her dainty little head on one side, as she surveyed the horses critically.

"This one," I cried, choosing a hideously ugly animal for its length of limb and size.

"Thank you very much," bounding into the vehicle without noticing my outstretched hand.

"Straight on, as fast as you can," she cried to the coachman, holding up a florin.

The ungainly horse disappeared like lightning, carrying away my Undine bowing gracefully.

"Thank you very, very much, Monsieur."

Water is a good conductor. I felt convinced that in the distance, above the sound of the rain and the departing wheels, I heard the echo of silvery laughter. My fair companion was evidently amusing herself at my expense. I wanted to be angry, but in spite of myself burst our laughing. What a fool I looked! Two cabmen fighting to get possession of me as I stood between them, the umbrella dropping from my hands. Perhaps I laughed louder than I intended; an echo in response seemed to answer me. "Well," I philosophised, "I may as well go to supper."

I went to Borrels; consequently was laid up for two days with violent indigestion. The rain had turned to snow before I could go out again. As a rule on arriving in St. Petersburg, one finds a small circle of country neighbours living close together, a clique from which it is difficult to free oneself. Perhaps fifty or sixty families quite content to make no further acquaintances. I was more Bohemian in my views, and liked to see many sides of life. Though I enjoyed mixing among "Society people," I had a hankering for the less conventional gatherings of the artistic circles. Among the houses I visited was one quite in the suburbs, unfortunately, for it was one where everyone enjoyed themselves. Perfect suppers, charming faces, delightful hosts, everything combined to make one thoroughly happy. Having been laid up, the moment I recovered the yearning for a "real good time" possessed me. I remembered Madame Bredine was "at home" every Thursday, and accordingly went to pay my respects to her. Dancing was at its height when I arrived. My hostess introduced me to five or six quite lovely girls. I chose a partner. It did not matter to me which one of them I secured, they were all so pretty. The dance over, I looked at my companion for the first time. She seemed very sedate, her eyes cast down as she examined her fan.

We sat down. It seemed to me, though her eyes were firmly riveted to her fan, she was in reality looking furtively at me. When she lifted them, I saw nothing beyond a pretty well-mannered girl, with cheeks a little over-flushed perhaps, and an almost imperceptible quiver in a dainty dimple at the corner of her mouth. I felt puzzled somehow, and commenced a stereotyped conversation suitable to the occasion. She answered in low voice, without looking at me. Her timidity struck me as unnatural, I had seen her but a few moments earlier, chatting and laughing, the centre of an animated group. I felt a sudden desire to solve the mystery if there was one, to force her to talk, utilising a useful but well-worn theme.

"Somehow I feel as if I have had the pleasure of meeting you before."

Her eyes were still downcast, but the dimple quivered perceptibly.

"Perhaps you have."

"Do you often go out?"

"No. It depends on circumstances."

"What do you mean? It depends on circumstances?"

"Yes," she looked up, gazing frankly in my face. "It *does* depend on circumstances."

"I have seen you before!" I cried eagerly. "I know your smile and face quite well, yet I cannot remember where."

"You *have* seen me before." She smiled slightly but the smile died quickly, and an air of reserve took its place; the dimple quivered more than ever.

"Tell me where?"

I mentioned twenty places unsuccessfully, begged her to tell me the name of the house we had met at, in vain. The next dance was commencing, she bowed gracefully; with a flutter of white ribbons and muslins, disappeared. I sought out my hostess.

"Tell me with whom I have been dancing?"

"I am sure I don't know," she answered laughing. "Did I not introduce you?"

"Does one ever catch the right name when one is introduced?"

"Describe the fair unknown to me."

"Nut brown hair; complexion of lilies and roses, laughing eyes, a serious manner, lovely mouth, and a dimple—oh, such a dimple!"

"What? One only?"

"Yes, but worth ten ordinary ones. Wait a moment. Here she comes."

"If it is a dimple that has bewitched you, Annette Teplof is the fortunate possessor of it. She has fascinated others besides yourself."

"Really?"

"Yes. She is a wicked little fairy, who does not laugh often, and never loudly, but is the most humorous of beings; that dimple betrays her.

If you have noticed it, make up your mind she has been making fun of you."

"That is consoling! She has only known me ten minutes, and she can turn me into ridicule. What a charming character!"

"You are right, perfectly charming.

She is always laughing at me. I never have a chance with her. You will be in love before the week is out."

"Who is she?"

"The daughter of a poor Tchinovnik, a clerk without fortune or prospects. Her mother was my aunt's governess, a good woman, who never goes into society, but naturally her young daughter needs amusing, so they send her to me every Thursday. I love her, so remember if you are to keep in my good graces you must be kind to her."

"To hear is to obey." I answered, with a bow.

Just as I left my hostess's side Mademoiselle Annette approached her,— "Who is he?"—marked in every feature of her face.

"A thoroughly nice young man," I heard Madame Bredine whisper.

"Indeed?" said Annette, looking at me gravely from top to toe. "I am quite pleased to hear it." Whereupon she turned her back and joined a circle of young companions.

"I know that profile. Where can I have seen it? Perhaps at the theatre," I said to myself. As I drew near the little group a merry peal of laughter arrested me. In an

instant, the deserted street, my umbrella, the "drochki" drenched in rain flashed across me.

"It is she!"

Annette turned at the moment, with a merry glance caught my eyes, which most probably looked startled. She burst out laughing, her



HER EYES WERE RIVETED ON HER FAN.

companions joined her.

"Detestable little girl, she can walk about the streets at eleven o'clock at night with unknown men, yet get herself received into honest houses. What audacity!"

I forgot for the moment that the "unknown men" happened to be myself, that she had not exactly picked me out as a companion on that lovely night. "I'll make her ashamed," I determined. "I will ask her to dance the Mazurka with me. Why should I wish to revenge myself? She had done me no harm, but why on earth should she amuse herself

at my expense? She deserves at least some punishment for that."

We had gone half through the dance before I deliberately addressed her.

"I know where I met you now."

She laughed heartily; I felt indignant.

"You have found me out?"

"Yes. When I heard you laugh."

"Oh! that is a terrible habit of mine. I think I should laugh in my grave."

Luckily it was time to start another figure; I had time to control my anger.

"Do you often have such adventures?"

"Never," she answered gravely. (Always that "Never"!)"And you?"

"I? Oh, that doesn't matter, I am a man."

"Oh, that makes all the difference, of course. You being a man had an umbrella. I being only a woman hadn't one!"

She laughed her light laugh again. I was so angry by this time I could not control myself.

"You mean I looked like a fool?"

"A fool? No, certainly not" (the dimple disappeared as if by magic); "but funny

oh! really funny! Just think how funny it seemed to me. One doesn't twice in one's life meet with such an amusing adventure."

"And you were not afraid."

"I am never afraid." (Her smile *was* fascinating after all!)

"But -- supposing I had been -- (I sought for a word) -- say -- disagreeable?"

"What could I have done? That day I was obliged to go and see my sister who was ill. It was lovely when I started. My brother-in-law had promised to see me home. He is a doctor and was called out unexpectedly. I had to return alone, there was nothing else for it."

"Was that the first time you had done such a thing?"

"So late, yes. In daylight, no. We are not rich enough to have a maid tacked to my apron strings."

"I have vexed you. Forgive me."

"No; I saw at once you were a gentleman."

"Well?"

"I just thought to myself at any moment I might come in contact with many that were not; to tell you the truth, Monsieur (here she blushed delightfully), I preferred your company until I could get a 'drochki' rather than be alone."

"Then after all I helped you without knowing it?"

"Most certainly."

"And your parents? Were they not anxious about your being out on such a night?"

"Oh! the weather! I was not afraid of that, and I told them how kind you had been in helping me."

"What! you told them?"

"Naturally."

"You said an interfering --"

"No, no! I told them how polite you had been and how you had offered me your umbrella, and found me a 'drochki' so kindly."

I felt once more at peace. The dimple annoyed me no longer; I was almost enamoured with my night adventures. After that, every Thursday found me at Madame Bredine's. Mademoiselle Teploff puzzled me. At the end of two months I failed to understand her. Was she a born coquette or simply a light-hearted child? Should I adore her or despise her? In spite of her simple explanation, the strangeness of our first meeting haunted me, and filled me with strange doubts. She always seemed at ease; I began to believe in her. I love a clinging woman. Even we men are sometimes timid. To hear a young girl of eighteen say she was afraid of nothing! It seemed to break down the common law of sex; at least she might simulate timidity, even if she had not the grace to feel it.

We became great friends, but in spite of Madame Bredine's prediction I did not fall in love. I had once loved my cousin Helene—I was nineteen at the time. She married Prince S—, handsomer, richer, older than myself, so I knew what love was. Now I addressed no high-flown sonnets to the moon,

or indulged in ecstasies of happiness and depths of despair, as I did then; still, whenever a Thursday passed without meeting Annette, I felt strangely disappointed. I missed her bright eyes and tell-tale dimple more than I could say. I was happy when she was there to dance with; I think I could have danced with her for ever. Then I would pull myself up when I realised the fact, and feel it was time to leave St. Petersburg and go home. Yet I stayed.

I don't know how it happened, but one day I went to call on Annette in her own home. It is not uncommon for young men to pay their respects to the parents of young girls whose acquaintance they have made at some mutual friend's house, though I had never done such a thing before. But one Thursday Mademoiselle Teplof told me the next day was her birthday, and asked me if I would not come and take chocolate with them. I could but accept her invitation. Somehow, after that, I found myself calling frequently. Madame and Monsieur Teplof were past their first youth when they married, Annette was their youngest child. They were a charming couple, not too refined, but possessing all the rugged honest worth of the true Russian nature, hospitable and superstitious to the highest degree. Their simple home-life pleased me. I thought it a pleasant background to Annette's beauty and naturalness of manner. The old people took a fancy to me. Sometimes I feared they took me as a suitor for their daughter's hand. This would make me chary of my visits for a while—only to return, irresistibly drawn by Annette's personality, which inspired me like a stimulant. She was the incarnation of Joy. However moody I might be when I entered the house, I left it a transformed being, content with everything in the world.

In the height of the skating season Madame Bredine organised two or three sledging parties, which were delightful.

Then just before Lent, on the Saturday in Carnival week, she had a large "At Home." Never had she had such a successful one.

Unfortunately, the master of the house caught a severe cold and had to retire early, begging us all to let it make no difference to our enjoyment, which it certainly did not. No one ignorant of Russian life can have the slightest idea how heartily we enter into the follies of the few days before Lent. With the thought of seven weeks' cessation from all gaieties, and denial of good living, we plunge with the most furious zeal into the most extravagant riot, heaping up sins in profusion to be repented of in days of abstinence, emerging at Easter, white-washed as saints, by absolution and self-denial, in fine condition for the feasts of veal and ham awaiting us after the long fast.

It was nearly midnight when Madame Bredine called me aside. "I want you to do something for me," she said, smiling. "I know I can trust you, so am going to give you a mission of honour. Will you be so kind as to take Mademoiselle Teplof home? My servants, I am sorry to say, are all more or less intoxicated—one can say nothing. It is the 'tradition of the Saints' on this night in the year. I know of no one I can trust the child with. My husband, who had promised to take her, is too ill. She refuses to stay the night here, lest her parents should be anxious."

"Please say no more, Madame. I am, as you know, only too willing to take Mademoiselle at any moment she likes."

It was nearly two in the morning, supper was over, the room thinning fast, when Annette came up to me and said timidly, "I am ready when you are, Monsieur."

We started off. There were plenty of sledges outside. Warmly muffled up in furs we glided swiftly over the frozen snow. There must have been twelve or fifteen degrees of frost, yet the night was as clear as day. The crisp air intoxicated us, after the warm house, making the blood flow in our veins and the colour come to our cheeks in a warm rush of youth and life. We chatted and laughed to our heart's content. Annette told me of her childhood; of a

summer passed in the country with her grandmother; of the lovely long summer days; the brilliant sunlight until nine at night, setting at last behind the forest of fir trees exhaling the most delicate perfumes.

"How I love the country," she exclaimed suddenly. "How happy you must be in your home there. One gets so tired of town life."

"Why?"

"I don't know, it wearies me. I should love to live in the country with a garden and lilac tree, heaps of lilac trees close to the river side."

Annette dreaming and sentimental! The idea struck me as so unlike herself that I exclaimed with surprise. She began to laugh, her charming characteristic laugh. It was infectious, but suddenly I thought of our first meeting. For a thoroughly good girl surely she was too much at ease with a young man, alone at three o'clock in the morning! We grew suddenly silent. Until, turning a corner, we were confronted by a blaze of crimson in the sky, with forked streaks of a deeper hue shooting out on every side.

"A fire!" cried Annette.

"Not very far off," said the coachman.

"Where can it be?"

"Near the Varna most probably. Quite close you may be certain.

"Here comes the fire engine," cried Annette, hearing a clatter behind. In a second it dashed past, followed by "troikas" carrying fire ladders. They vanished like lightning, arousing every dog in the neighbourhood as they passed. Our coachman suggested that he should drive us to see it.

"Yes, yes," we cried simultaneously. He whipped on his horses, we literally galloped through the snow, every moment becoming more lurid as the fire increased. It was farther than we thought. After several turnings we arrived at the end of a street only to find it so crowded we had to arrest our speed.

"We shall have to walk," I said. As we got out of the sledge Annette seized my hand

and stumbled across the heavy snow. We turned the corner and faced a glorious spectacle. An enormous soap warehouse on fire! Isolated from all other houses, it stood alone, one mass of flame from basement to roof. The engines were powerless to have the slightest effect on it. It was doomed to be burnt to the ground. Suddenly a shrill cry issued from the centre of the flames. There was someone left inside.

"How terrible," moaned Annette, as she clung to my arm. The hose was quickly turned on to the burning wall. Firemen endeavoured to reach the unfortunate victim. Three or four times it seemed as if they had succeeded in reaching the window where two arms were distinctly visible, pleading for rescue, but the flames drove them back each time. A horrified silence fell on the mob.

"They cannot do it," cried a hoarse voice.

"Courage, lads!" cried another, evidently the owner of the burning house, who had just arrived on the spot. At his words ten ladders were instantly placed against the tottering wall, after an agonised suspense a fireman heroically reached the spot, and was seen bearing in his arms the unconscious figure of a man. A second after he had reached the ground, with one magnificent spurt of fervid flame, the walls fell in with a terrible crash.

"It is all over," said Annette, "let us go."

Her voice startled me. I looked at her, her teeth were chattering, she trembled all over.

"What is the matter?" I said, alarmed at her appearance.

"I feel ill—I think I am cold—let us go home."

It was not easy to retrace our steps. However, at last we found our driver, and after the promise of an outrageous fare, persuaded him to drive us back. Annette was shivering still, though she tried to laugh, a laugh that somehow jarred on me. I felt anxious, but to all my questions she merely answered "I am cold—terribly cold."

"It was foolish of us to go," I said. "I am so distressed at the result of our adventurous drive."

"No, on the contrary," said Annette, her voice full of intense feeling, "it was beautiful, and with you—I am glad we went."

I felt under the power of some strange influence, what with the excitement of the ball, the keen air, the terrible scene we had just witnessed, a mere bundle of nerves.

With her father! What had I to do with him? I thought angrily. I made no more than the most superficial remarks after that. Leaving Annette in the hands of their one servant, I reached home tired out, unhappy, and agitated. What sort of figure was I to cut in life? Not that of a man who knew his own mind, evidently. I hated myself. "Did I love her?" The question repeated itself twenty times as I turned and tossed in bed.



"MARRIED! MARRIED!"

"Is it better to have shared it with me than anyone else?" I whispered.

"With anyone else? I have never done anything with anyone else. I feel safe with you." I pressed her hand.

She still continued to complain of feeling cold. As we passed my hotel a mad fancy suggested itself to me.

"This is where I am staying. Will you come in and have a cup of tea?"

She looked astonished, a look of delight flitted across her face. Smiling sweetly, she said, "Not to-day; whenever you like with my father."

"Yes," said a voice. "No," said another.

"Supposing she loves me?" Well, that's not my fault; of course I cannot marry her. But if I was sure she—she what? That she had never loved anyone but me? A young girl who goes out alone—she confessed it herself—goes to look at a fire at three o'clock in the morning. What sort of a girl can she be? Impossible! I don't love her. No, certainly not. I fell asleep. On awaking, I kept firmly to my resolve. I had quite made up my mind not to love her, most certainly not to marry her. Still, common politeness forced me to call and enquire after her

health. I did not wish to do it, but it must be done, so, a martyr to stern duty, I sallied forth about two o'clock. I found the young girl in the salon, lying on the green sofa—inevitable piece of furniture found in every middle-class Russian home. When I saw her face a feeling of involuntary pity came over me. How changed she looked: she must be suffering, surely?

"What is wrong, Annette Ivanovna?"

"I don't know," she answered with a shiver. "I believe I have caught a fever."

"Your parents are very wrong not to have sent for a doctor after such a night. I shall tell them so."

"No, no: tell them nothing; they have not the slightest idea. They would be so grieved."

Untrustworthy girl. She kept secrets to herself. After having met me for the first time as she did, and giving me the run of the house, she robed our meetings in mystery; was it her custom to keep dark corners in her life? More bewildered than ever, seriously annoyed with a reticence that seemed to me teeming with possible catastrophes, I asked severely:

"Why have you kept it a secret?"

"To escape being scolded for going so far in my ball-dress. If they guessed how I caught cold they would never forgive themselves."

The explanation sounded sincere enough, yet doubt more than ever gnawed at my heart; but when I looked at the poor child my feelings softened.

"I am more than distressed, Annette Ivanovna, that such an accident should have happened to you all through my fault."

"Not at all. The fault was mine."

"Ours then," I said, without thinking. "But I am older than you, I ought to have known better."

Her face lighted up. "How sweet of you to scold me. Everyone says I am so wilful. It is not true. Scold me as much as you like, you shall see."

The situation was intolerable. I determined to put an end to it.

"Unfortunately," I said coldly, "I cannot amuse you long in that way—as I am going away."

"Going away?"

"Yes, Mademoiselle."

"Why?"

A diabolical idea seized me.

"They are wanting me at home."

"Who are? Your parents?"

I felt tortured. I would have given anything to escape, my conscience seemed to have deserted me; a lie—cruel, useless, detestable, rose to my lips. Annette repeated her question in a voice of positive agony.

"My wife," I said, calmly looking my victim full in the face.

Her face quivered painfully, her eyes filled with speechless agony, as she drew a long breath. It reminded me of a death scene. The hand a moment before raised towards me fell inert by her side, she looked like one suddenly struck dumb. How I wished myself at the other end of the world.

"You are married?" I could hardly hear her voice.

"Yes."

"You are married? I never knew," she repeated like a child suddenly chidden for a fault. "I never knew, Monsieur Serge."

A sudden wild longing to take her in my arms came over me, to lay her head on my breast, and tell her—"I have lied. I love you, I love no one but you."

But the silence she had edged round our night's escapade rose before me. My heart turned to stone.

"I shall come and see you again, Mademoiselle Annette. Take my advice, and see a doctor. You are not well."

Without speaking she walked with me to the door.

"I swear to you, Serge Pavlovitch, I never knew." As she spoke her voice sounded heart broken.

"Adieu."

She used the word in the Russian sense, meaning, "Good-bye, forgive me."

I held out my hand. She placed her's in

it. It was cold as death. The door closed. I heard a heavy fall on the floor. Then sounds of stifled sobs.

Four days passed away. I did not dare to go to Madame Teplofs. I felt like a man who has become a murderer without intending to be one. At last I could stand it no longer. On Thursday night I called on Madame Bredine. It being Lent, she was alone. "Well? You have heard?" she said, as I entered. "Poor little Annette Teplof —"

"What?" A sudden feeling of numbness came over over me.

"She is very ill—so terribly ill that there is no hope. It appears she caught cold going home from here."

"What has she caught?" It seemed to me my voice had lost all sound. Madame Bredine looked at me with evident astonishment.

"Brain fever, I think."

"Oh, I cannot bear her to die," I cried, losing my head completely. "I love her. Annette, Annette! Great merciful God, save her! My life is hers."

Madame Bredine still looked at me unable to understand. I implored her passionately to go with me to the Teplofs. At last she consented. The old couple, plunged in sorrow, never remarked the strangeness of our night visit. Annette lay motionless on the green sofa, that had been transformed into a bed. She had been placed there the very day I had seen her, her illness having suddenly taken such an alarming turn they were unable to move her. All her beautiful hair was cut off; her head covered with ice; her emaciated face, with the burning crimson of fever on it, hardly recognisable. Her only movement was to clasp her hands in despair as she repeated over and over again in a monotonous voice—

"Married! Married! Married! What have I done? Married! Married! Oh, how wicked I am."

The cry rose to a wail that brought tears even to the eyes of the professional nurse.

"Who is married?" asked Madame

Bredine of the poor mother, standing by the death-bed of her beloved child.

"No one. I don't know. It is delirium. She has been like that since Sunday night. The doctor says it is quite hopeless. She will die to-night. My little child!"

I gazed for a second at the terrible scene. Annette, clutching the bed-clothes, began again the piteous cry.

"Married! Married! Married!"

I could bear it no longer. I dashed out of the house, the brand of Cain upon me.

Annette died that night.

It all happened two years ago. Two or three times since I have endeavoured to blot out the picture of that night by determining to marry, but just when I have made up my mind to ask the final question, a voice, dying and broken-hearted, sobs in my ears—"Married! Married! Married!"

And I dare not.

EMILY KERR.

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM.

PLUTARCH, in his "Life of Demetrius," to explain why he gave an account of a career which he certainly did not wish his pupil to imitate, tells how "Ismenias, the Theban musician, presented his scholars with both good and bad performers on the flute, and used to say 'Thus you must play, and thus you must not play.'" Last time, unconsciously, I took a leaf from Plutarch's book, for while doing my best to tell our scholars how to write, I gave them a distinct example of how not to write—namely, illegibly. My own hand-writing was to blame. I can only beg our class to take warning by me.

Legibility is a gift the journalist should acquire from the very commencement of her career, for her own sake, quite apart from any charitable consideration for editors and compositors; they can take care of themselves. It is extremely difficult for an imaginative person to write well, the thoughts run so

much faster than the pen; and imaginative people, unless they have had the advantage of a classical education, rarely can spell. These things do not matter much in story writing; indeed, I know of one editor who declares he always reads the badly written stories first, because he finds the neat well-written ones are generally dull. But in any case, in these days of typewriting, the hand of a story writer is unimportant, moreover, the errors in a story can be set right in the proofs. Journalism, however, gives no time for proofs, the errors are in print before you see them. Spelling need not trouble you compositors can all spell, but it is necessary that you should absolutely make it clear to them what word you are trying to spell, and you must be specially legible in foreign words, which they cannot be expected to know. A mis-print of a foreign word or name, goes out to the world as your ignorance; a seeming misquotation sets the teeth on edge of every lover of the author misquoted. You are fortunate if none of them write violently to the editor calling you names.

But before considering the damage it is to you as a journalist to be misprinted, we must consider the difficulty an unknown illegible journalist has in getting printed at all. Unlike the magazine editor I have quoted, an editor of a daily or even weekly journal has no time for theories. He cannot afford to study illegible MSS. on the chance that they may be brighter than well-written ones. He must take what he can see at a glance will do, for if the ill-written MSS. are sometimes exceptionally original they are sometimes exceptionally bad. Well-written articles are rarely the latter. According to the magazine editor I have quoted, the best and the worst MSS. are generally badly written, thus well-written are "average" as a rule, and mediocrity is so safe. In a great many offices, of course, all matter is printed off before it is submitted to the editor, but even then the article which comes up with mistakes as to names, or in grammar, stands a poor chance.

The editor has no time to set right inaccuracies, or care whether they are yours or the printers.

Above all it must be remembered that there is one kind of bad hand-writing which no one can tolerate, and no editor, even of a monthly magazine, be expected to read, that is the kind which might be called "The Flourishing Spider." A thin hand full of wild unnecessary and bewildering lines, generally with the m's and u's identical. Let your hand be as ugly as you will, but make it clear, open, absolutely devoid of flourishes, and with the m's and n's right way up. Some of the hands of the work sent in last month were of a kind calculated to elicit "declined with thanks," from any editor who ever lived. They gave one a headache even from the other side of the writing-table. Others, though ugly, were so bold and characteristic that one instinctively took them first. And it is only wise to remember that an editor, having found in the manuscript he has opened what will suit his purpose even pretty well, is most unlikely to search further.

Punctuation is another important matter. The force and character of your writing depends on it. Most of our scholars have the truly feminine habit of punctuating entirely with dashes, longer or shorter, as they mean full stops, semi-colons or commas. This is an easy and pleasant method, but misleading to the printer. If your full stop dash is a little too long he takes it for an ordinary dash, and prints you—as it were—in gasps; for the rest he follows the stereotyped rules of punctuation, and does very well.

The sentences in so many of the compositions last time were so long and so involved, that for our next exercise we had better have a study in phrasing.

Take any five long sentences out of any book or newspaper article, consecutive if possible, but at any rate on the same subject, and put them into short crisp sentences conveying the same meaning. Papers must be sent in on or before February 25th.



ON THINGS IN GENERAL.

"I CAME in a penny bus," said the bride; "I spent all my money on Christmas presents, and have none left for cab fares."

"That was just like you," said the chaperon. "You are one of the class of people who give presents. Have you ever noticed how distinct the two classes are—the class of people who give presents, and the class of people who receive them? You, as I said, belong to the first class. You have got a reputation for giving, and so you must never expect to have any nice presents yourself. Did you, by the way?"

"Well, no," admitted the bride, doubtfully, "except Tom's, of course; but he let me choose that. I had been worrying a little; I had been hoping no one was as irritated and disappointed with what I gave them, as I was with some of the things which were given to me; it really seemed almost a slight that any one should have thought I wanted them."

"When one thinks of it," said the girl of three seasons, "the present givers also divide themselves into two classes, those who give you what they think you want, and those who give you what they don't want themselves. I number a few of each among my acquaintances. I always feel tempted to send the last sort of present back and say 'no thank you. I don't want it either.'"

"The most miserable thing I know," said Cousin May, "is to receive something you don't like from someone who has tried hard to give you pleasure. You have to pretend, and you feel so mean. A nice aunt

of mine gave me a lovely violet velvet cape, and violet is the one colour I can't wear. I nearly cried."

"Pack it away in camphor and musk," said the chaperon, "no one looks well in violet until they are over thirty, by that time capes will have gone out and come in again; but I do not wonder you were disappointed. Lily, how long ago is it since I found you crying because a long delayed birthday present turned out to be a French dictionary?"

The debutante blushed and laughed. "It was a *horrid* present, and grandmama meant to please me; they had told her I was fond of my lessons. It was so hard to look pleased and grateful when she gave it to me, but I tried to."

"Uncle Ralph sent me a cheque to buy something for myself," said the engaged girl. "That was a very nice present; I was able to buy a few nice things for people I liked, and get myself a set of silver-mounted hair brushes——"

"Oh—but you bought a cigar case, and some tablecloths and serviettes, too," cried the younger sister, "for I was with you."

The rest laughed, and the engaged girl blushed and confessed.

"A cheque is the best of all presents to send to a girl who is thinking of being married," said the chaperon, "but for the rest of us, the chief pleasure of a present is the surprise of it—the finding out that some one has taken trouble to consider what one would like, and taken pleasure in providing it for you. I remember just before I was engaged to your uncle he heard me say I would like to have a mongoose, and at Christmas time he

searched London until he found one. How well I remember my delight when it came."

"But had you really wanted a mongoose?" asked the debutante.

"Well, no; at least not very much, it was a momentary fancy—but what pleased me was that he should want to get me what he thought I wanted, don't you see? That's the pleasure of a present."

"It is not only that," said Cousin May. "an ideal present is a thing one would like to have, but would feel greedy if one bought for oneself."

"It is astonishing how one does grudge oneself little luxuries," said the bride. "little extra elegancies which cost far less than the sums we spend as a matter of course on clothes. I am quite sure that if Madge had not been going to be married she would never have indulged herself with those silver hair brushes, even though the money which paid for them was a present. I never thought of this until last night, when the man who took me down to dinner put it into my mind. He was such a distinguished artist, it would not be fair to tell you his name, and he told me how for years he had been wanting a little steel chain to attach his latch key to the key of his studio, but never had the energy to get it for himself. The other day a friend who had noticed that he always forgot which key was in which pocket, brought him a chain. He told me that he had been very much more pleased than when a rich relation gave him an ugly dinner set, though at that time he was poor, and needed the dinner set; he said we all grudged ourselves little indulgences, however much we spent on big things, and I remembered for how many years I had longed for a little cast of the 'Venus of Milo,' but I should never have bought it for myself. I should never have had it if I hadn't been married."

"I do buy presents for myself, now and then," said Cousin May. "Whenever I am in very low spirits I go and buy something I could do without. One thing I wanted very

much for a long time was an ivory-backed hand-glass with a curly handle. I used to think that some day when I was famous and my books were a success, I would buy it. It was a fascinating thing—it suggested mermaids with long hair, and moonlight nights and the sound of the sea—why, I don't know since ivory comes from the desert. Oh! I wanted that hand-glass dreadfully. At last one day when I was very miserable—everything had gone wrong, and a person I thought well of had shocked and disappointed me, and it was raining—and I happened to pass the shop where the hand-glass was, and I went in and bought it.

"Did it do you good?" asked the debutante.

"Of course," said the chaperon, "a little recklessness does a self-restrained person as much good as a little self-restraint does a reckless person. I wish I had been there May, to buy the glass for you; it is so nice to be able to give a person just what they want. If receiving presents is sometimes an aggravation, giving them is a very difficult matter. After this, I shall make it a rule if I don't know just what people want, to give them something I should like to have myself, and then I shan't feel myself one of the second sort of givers according to Ada's classification. How do you manage your present-giving, Ada?"

"This year I took a very great deal of trouble with very indifferent results," said Ada, laughing; "for the future I shall make one rule and keep to it. I shall give everyone pocket-handkerchiefs—the quality and quantity only will vary; that will depend on how much I like the recipient, and how much money I happen to have. But pocket handkerchiefs are so safe."

Some few of the MSS. sent in to the School of Journalism contain neither name nor address, so it is impossible to return them. Some members of the class have forgotten to put stamps on their wrappers.

A TALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

IS CYCLING A LEGITIMATE PASTIME FOR WOMEN?

THE crucial test of all pastime must answer to the query, Is it healthful? A writer in the *British Medical Journal* undeniably states "that the judicious use of the bicycle, so far from being injurious, is extremely beneficial." "There is nothing for the health like cycling. It augments the strength and lengthens life." Hard work of any sort involves considerable waste of tissue. Cycling takes its votaries into an extremely fascinating world, where the fret of daily duties are wafted by the powerful nerve tonic and inspirator, which really forms true pastime, and there ensues no injurious re-action. The blessing of cycling is only conditional. The safe motto is moderation. Those who exceed this boundary will pay dearly for it. In every legitimate pastime there are danger-signals. These are too evident for repetition. Let the stern mentor pass her decree upon those who have not conformed to the unwritten code. Common sense and womanly sense must guard the frontier. The virgins of the present day, in a double sense, should heed the burning of their lamps. Given these conditions, cycling may justly claim to be the elixir of life. The craze for the wheel has demolished many feminine idols. The three-volume novel and the confectioners' cream and candy have paled. Rigid self-denial has been enforced to purchase the slender, graceful wheel. Great neatness in dress is required. The grand dame has stemmed popular prejudice, and the working sisterhood have readily acquiesced in the extension of another legitimate pastime.

ANNIE COCKRAM.

THOSE men and women who are of conservative mind will favour the exercise. Surely cycling is a great adjunct in physical development of women, and an improvement of their general health. Health is a very close ally of religion, and a great promoter of general good feeling. In the bicycle is a mine of hope and genuine pleasure for women, even as for men. Bicycling does not call for the abrogation of the petticoat; therefore it should be regarded as legitimate. Women should do everything they desire to do which is reputable, and because they have taken to the wheel there is no reason why they should leave the safe traditions of the past. Regarded from a medical point of view, bicycling is considered an immense advantage, which will tend to the hardihood of our race, and, perchance, the longevity of future generations. The coming age will not produce women feeble in body and mind, unable to support, only able to lean; pretty and amiable, but without any definite opinions on anything save their own need of love and shelter; absorbed in trifles, incapable of conversation on the affairs of the great world, which goes on its stupendous course while they sit playing

with toys safely fenced out of harm's way; the women of whom Amelia, in "Vanity Fair," and Rosamond, in "Middlemarch," are varying types; but women who are healthy, vigorous, intellectual, the type and basis of the future perfectibility of the human race.

DELIA GLYN.

In itself it is legitimate. Besides being healthy exercise, it gives to girls a certain amount of freedom and independence, and, to those who can afford only "the poor man's horse," countless conveniences and pleasures otherwise unattainable. It should give a mind-widening influence by affording opportunities for social intercourse and for travelling for pleasure through our own country; a duty which, as a nation, we shamefully neglect. Cycling is ungraceful. In some places it is made positively vulgar, showing a want of womanly refinement, never to be tolerated. But, as a rule, in England we do not do this. The disadvantages of cycling are the fault of the cyclists. No hobby has been so run to death. No horribly unintellectual theme has been made more stupid and uninteresting by the brainless youth of the day. We quickly recognise the awkward young woman, with skirts above her ankles, who recounts adventures and misfortunes on her "bike," and drinks tea standing, as though always starting on a journey. Women may do almost anything. It is the way they do it that matters. Let women cyclists be silent, neither living for, nor wasting time over, their hobby. Nor should they become careless in their dress. Lastly, they should be as graceful as possible. We forget beauty is the greatest refiner the world knows. Cycling is abused by its advocates. We must see improvements in them before we say it or its results are entirely satisfactory.

ANNIE MARY BRUNLEES.

No; cycling is not a legitimate pastime for women. It is ungraceful and altogether unladylike; besides which, it is totally unsuitable as an exercise for women, even in these days when the "vapours" and "nerves" of our grandmothers are things unknown. Surely, in cycling women must, of necessity, lose that cherished possession, their refinement. It is scarcely compatible with their dignity to be seen tearing along crowded streets, or flying at a break-neck speed down steep hills in the country. I know that advocates for cycling always put forward the plea that it is a boon to those women who labour all the week in our crowded towns. But, so far, the teachers and workers who bicycle to and from their work, or who are able to spend their holiday bicycling in the country, are in a decided minority. Some cannot afford it, others prefer to walk. From what the devotees of cycling say, we are led to suppose that, for dwellers in town, it is well nigh impossible to breathe the fresh air of heaven, or taste all the delights of the country, save upon the much-lauded bicycle. But, surely, this is somewhat misleading, for from all our large towns, even from London, a few miles by rail takes us right into the country, where wholesome fresh air can be breathed at will as we wander on, and where country sights can be enjoyed as they never are enjoyed on that fashionable machine, the bicycle.

SISSIE HUNTER.

ATALANTA CLUB.

Subject for February: "Are men degenerating?" Papers must not exceed more than *two hundred and fifty words*, and must be sent in on or before February 25th. Prizes of five shillings will be awarded to each of the four best papers, which will be published in the body of the Magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

Give a dispute in dialect between two old women of the lower class. Analyse the chief characteristics of Cecil, Lord Burleigh. Write a Miltonic sonnet, *i.e.*, unbroken continuity between octave and sestet. Subject for the School of Journalism will be found on page 316. All papers must be sent in on or before February 25th. Members may only enter for one of these subjects. Full rules for the above will be found among the advertising pages at the end of this number.

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (JANUARY).

I.

1. The proper bard or poet of a chieftain.
2. Messengers were sent through the land, if for war, each carrying a *banded bow*; but if for peace, the bow was *unstrung*.—See *The Cambrian Antiquities*.

II.

1. "Midsummer Night's Dream," Act I, Sc. 1.
2. Henry VIII. Q. Kath. Act 3, Sc. 1.
3. Hamlet, Act I, Sc. 3.

III.

1. William Gifford, who wrote an unfavourable review of Keats' "Endymion," in the *Quarterly*.
2. In the "Adonais." 3. By Shelley.

IV.

1. "Immortality" (Frederick W. H. Myers).
2. "Without her" *House of Life*, III. (D. G. Rossetti).
3. "Foreshadowings" (Theodore Watts).

V.

1. The moon, in Egypt, has the effect of producing blindness to those who sleep with the face exposed to its rays.
2. In "Al Aaraaf."
3. By Edgar Allan Poe.

VI.

1. "A Dream" (Edgar Allan Poe).
2. "Isabella, or The Pot of Basil" (Keats).
3. Valeria, "Coriolanus," Act 5, Sc. 3.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR FEBRUARY.

I.

1. Who wrote the book "De Veritate"?
2. Which poet so describes himself, owing to his feebleness of constitution—
"He had too thoughtful a wit; a wit like a pen-knife in too narrow a sheath: too sharp for his body"?

II.

1. Explain the meaning of the term "The Beltane Tree"?
2. From what source is Ariosto supposed to have taken his tale of the Enchanted Cap?
3. What was the usual oblation to propitiate the supposed fairies in the haunted spring of Minchmore?
4. What circumstance procured for the Highlanders the well-known term of "Red-Shanks"?

III.

Find quotations—give authors—

1. "And when at last thy love shall die,
Wilt thou receive his parting breath,
Wilt thou repress each struggling sigh,
And cheer with smiles the bed of death?"
2. "Oh! if thou hover'st round my walk,
While under every well-known tree,
I to thy fancy'd shadow talk,
And every tear is full of thee."

IV.

1. What is the meaning of the lines—
"Half sunk within the shadowy brim
Half brightened by the eternal ray."
2. And these—
"Just as the beak of playful doves
Can give to pearls a smoother whiteness."

V.

Put the concluding lines to these quotations—

1. "But this delight was stilled,
As it began to dawn,—"
2. "All my soul, and all my heart,
And every wish shall pant for you,—"
3. "Ask me no more, whither do stray
The golden atoms of the day;—"
4. "On a hill there grows a flower,
Fair befall the dainty sweet!—"

VI.

1. Explain the meaning of the word "bread" in the line
"If I misse my marke one shilling bread."
2. Give the meaning of the two words, "blee" and "sweetens."



I SHTAR.

You have forgotten me, and I forget you
Awhile : and watch my hornéd crown wax pale
With your forgetfulness ; but ere it fail
Like a moon in earth's shadow, I shall wake
And strange and sore will be the tasks I set you,
And stranger yet the vengeance I shall take.

The sun shall darken at the moon's uprising ;
Anu departs, but Ishtar shall not pass.
The lily is cut down—not so the grass,
Though my sons scorn me, surely I abide.
What recks the grass now of the tower's despising ?
Grass climbs the tower, and nettles grow outside.

Anu and Bel were wroth, and would not tarry ;
Despised of men. Athwart each shining face
They drew the darkness, and Earth grieved a space ;
But loved the earth-born best—and over-soon
Took comfort, weaving nests and watching marry
Lily and bee. More patient is the Moon.

NORA HOPPER.



RETURN NO MORE!

From the *Paving of the Way* 1880

LITTLE MISS LUSTRING.

BY AGNES GIBERNE.

CHAPTER VIII.

A CHANGE OF FRONT.

It was very difficult to make out what Mrs. Auckland wanted. Speech had become broken, like that of a little child, and her wilfulness resembled that of a child also. She would push her nurse pettishly away, and would slap Maud on the cheek with her free left hand, if she could not instantly have her desire. Since she used the wrong words for almost everything, and said one thing when she meant another, it was not always possible to find out what she did want.

On one day in particular, the household was exercised in mind to make out the craving which possessed her. She was rather better bodily, but not clearer mentally,—or rather, not better able to express her thoughts. When she wished to have some broth, she talked of poodles and Kamskatka; when she wanted Hugo, she cried for “her husband;” and when annoyed at having to swallow medicine, she poked her spoon in the nurse’s face. Then she slapped anew her much-enduring daughter, and finally began to insist in strenuous style upon something— but what, nobody could discover. Maud went through the alphabet, naming every conceivable noun in turn, only to meet with an ever-indignant “No!” For if Mrs. Auckland could not fish up the right terms from the confused abyss of her memory, she knew perfectly well what she required. There was no taking her in. Nothing else would do instead. Hugo at length was called, to try what he could do. He sat down by her side, a big awkward man, but gentle with her as any woman could have been. His broad hand fondled her weak fingers tenderly. “Yes, mother dear,” he said. “What is it?”

She looked into his face, with a troubled solicitude, which seemed to speak of anxiety

for him, not for herself. It might be that, through all her mental bewilderment, she noted signs of the burden which had rested upon him of late. Maud saw and wondered. “Want—want—want—” the invalid kept saying. “Want—”

“You want something? Somebody? Is that it? Not a thing, but a person? Yes, I understand. We must find out who the person is. Somebody at a distance? No? Somebody here? In the house? Not Maud, of course! Maud is in the room now.”

“No!” with a frowning shake of the head. “Want—” and then, making a great effort— “daugh—daugh—daughter!”

“She does want me after all, Hugo.” Maud came near, and was rewarded by a decisive push. Mrs. Auckland had reverted to childish methods of venting her emotions.

Hugo showed greater penetration than anyone. The others exchanged half-amused, half-puzzled glances. He at once said,— “Do you want Rosina? Would you like her to come and see you?”

“Yes. Rosina.” Then she began to cry.

It had been too impossible an idea to suggest itself to Maud’s mind. “Hugo, she cannot mean that! She cannot! And the excitement would do her harm.”

“Want— want— Rosina!” the old lady repeated.

“Yes, mother. I will ask the doctor, and if he does not mind, she shall come.”

Maud was dumb. Rosina to be wanted by her mother! Rosina to be admitted to the sick-room. She looked at Hugo, and was stirred by the impassive gravity of his face. He did not show pleasure, as a few weeks earlier he would have done. It seemed to be almost a matter of indifference to him.

“You do not surely mean to bring Rosina here! It is a mere passing fancy,” she said.

“The doctor must decide. I am going to him at once.” Hugo spoke a soothing word or two to Mrs. Auckland, and vanished.

He drove first to the doctor’s, found him in, put the matter before him, and obtained full permission to gratify the old lady’s fancy.

"It can do no injury; it may do good," the doctor remarked.

Hugo then drove thoughtfully towards the Lustrings' house. His enjoyment in going there had paled lately; for the seed flung into his heart had taken root and had spread widely. Although in theory he still forbade himself to accept Maud's suspicions, he had in fact accepted them. He did not love Rosina less, but he no longer had confidence in her love for him. He did not go to see her so often as formerly; and though his mother's illness might account for this, it was not the true cause. He was restless in mind, unsettled, doubtful, prepared to credit almost anything, ready on the smallest provocation to take action, even while still counting himself unconvinced, while still endeavouring to treat Rosina as if no change whatever had come about. In the latter aim he was not so successful as he thought. Rosina had gradually become aware of a difference in his manner.

She would not expect him to-day, he knew. He had been the day before, and he had said that he should not call again so soon. He would therefore take her by surprise. He intended to ask her if she would come back with him at once for an hour or two. Perhaps the mode in which she received him and heard his request might help to clear away fogs, one way or the other.

Outside the village he stopped; gave his man a note to carry to a friend at a little distance, and said he would walk to the house. "You can follow me when you have left the note," he added. There was no reason why the note should not be taken after he had reached the Lustrings, but he had a fancy to act thus. Hardly was the dog-cart out of sight, when he saw Dr. Lustring coming to meet him.

The doctor's face wore an expression not easy to translate. Hugo found himself puzzling over it, in the moment which intervened before they shook hands. "Good

morning," Hugo said. "I suppose I shall find Rosina."

"Oh—ah—ay yes. No doubt. She's within, I believe. Yes, certainly—she's within!" Dr. Lustring gave vent to one of his grating laughs. "You will find her. She is—rather—busy, I believe."

"She will see me, of course," Hugo felt annoyed, without knowing why.

"Yes, of course. No doubt. Yes, she'll see you. Just ring at the front door, you know. They'll find out where she is. Got a particular friend with her this morning—from a distance. Mrs. Auckland better? That's right. Fine day."

The doctor had managed to stir up Hugo's suspicions to an acute pitch. There might not be much in what he had actually said, but in his manner any amount of meaning might lie hidden. He did not offer to turn back, and went off, chuckling to himself. Hugo caught a glimpse of his smile, and knew as by instinct that something unexpected lay ahead; if, indeed, it were unexpected. At that moment Hugo was ready for anything. He would be surprised by nothing. So, at least, he imagined. But if not capable of being surprised, he was very capable of being made angry; and tempestuous waves were already surging within.

He went straight for the house, with long swinging strides, paying heed to nothing by the way. He did not ring at the front door, as the doctor had suggested, but walked in, careless of Mrs. Lustring's opinions on that head, and entered the drawing-room unannounced.

It was at a critical moment that he arrived. Mrs. Lustring was not present. Rosina stood in front of the fireplace; and facing her was Vickars. The latter was tall and limp, and he stood in a slouching attitude as if he suffered from a weak back, and liked to draw attention to the same. His hair, too, had a limp appearance; and his large shallow eyes were fixed upon Rosina with their usual persistent stare, which

might mean either general interest or particular admiration. Rosina was gazing earnestly into his face, her hand lay confidently in his, and she seemed to be responding with warmth to something he had just said. As Hugo entered her voice ceased, but the colour in her cheeks, the smile upon her lips, the light in her eyes, all spoke eloquently of what she felt.

"Yes, I promise, Rosie. You shall have your way. I'll do exactly what you wish. And you must give me this—to keep in memory of to-day. To remind me, you know. Not that I'm likely to forget." Vickars stretched out his hand, and disengaged a rosebud from the front of Rosina's dress, and the girl submitted with no sign of annoyance. She even smiled at him as if well content.

Hugo walked up the room, without an instant's hesitation. He had never in his life been in such a passion as at this moment. It had become at once fully evident to him that Maud's suspicions were well founded; that Rosina, while engaged to himself, loved Vickars. Wrath, not sorrow, was the prevailing sensation in his mind. He could have knocked Vickars down with delight.

"Hugo!" uttered Rosina. Her face changed, and a tinge of uneasiness crept into it. Half in fear she glanced at Vickars.

Hugo stood before them both, tall and upright, for once almost dignified, though in general he was not a man of dignified bearing. His hands were firmly closed, and he was very much flushed.

"There was no need for this sort of thing," he said. "If you had told me how matters were, I would have withdrawn at once."

Rosina was silent. The air of the room seemed to be buzzing loudly about her ears, and she could not at once resolve what to say.

"I would not believe it sooner, though I was told—I would not believe that you could deceive me. But now——" Hugo found that he had not control of his own voice, and he came perforce to a pause. It had grown thick, almost inarticulate.

"Has the feller been drinking?" demanded Vickars, with a drawl.

Hugo gave him one withering glance, then turned anew to Rosina.

"I came," he said, "with the intention of asking a favour,—of asking whether you would come home with me, and see my mother——"

"Of course I will, Hugo," she said at once. She spoke gently, but with a little intonation of protest against his unwonted roughness, for she had not known before that he would be capable of such a mood as this.

"Thanks! I did not know then what I have learnt now. I can hardly place myself under any further obligations to you. This alters everything. Now that I understand how things really are——"



FACING HER WAS VICKARS.

"Do you think you do understand?" she put in. She had grown very white.

"After seeing you and this—Mr. Vickars—together, as when I came in just now, there can hardly be room for doubt. I have had my suspicions, and have not given way

to them; but this settles the question. . . . Pray do not make yourself unhappy. No doubt it is all for the best. Much better than if the deception had gone on longer. I blame others more than yourself—but—"

Rosina was silent, looking on the ground. Hugo stood gloomily, with hands still clenched.

"At all events, you may now count yourself entirely free. You and Mr. Vickars are at liberty to carry out the programme, which no doubt you have both been hankering after. I shall not trouble you again."

The thickened voice broke anew. Hugo cleared it, attempted to say more, failed, turned, and hastily left the room. Rosina's lips parted in a low "Hugo!" but he did not hear the sound. The front door banged behind him, and his heavy steps passed quickly down the garden. Vickars burst out laughing.

"Well, what do you say, Rosie? That's a rum sort of fellow. You're well out of his hands, I say. What do you think?"

She lifted troubled eyes to his. "I don't think I know what he meant. He — I am engaged to him, you know."

"Yes, I know it now. Ought to have known it before. No — I don't know it now, I mean. You're not engaged to him any longer. He's thrown you overboard. Left you to — what do you say, Rosie? Will you be my little wife instead? I'll make you happier than he ever could."

Rosina broke into a cry, and fled from the room. Vickars complacently stroked his chin. "She'll come round to it in time," he said.

Hugo met his dog-cart, and drove home with no unnecessary remarks. As yet he did not repent the bitter words he had spoken, did not see that his manliness had somewhat failed him in the interview just over. Anger had full possession still of his whole being. Maud saw with surprise, as he came in, that he was alone — flushed, disturbed, not himself. When she enquired, "Have you not brought

Rosina?" he answered "No!" in a harsh voice, unlike his own.

"My mother keeps on asking for her."

"She will have to keep on."

"Hugo, what do you mean?"

Hugo walked into the library, and Maud followed him. He turned and faced her.

"You were right," he said curtly. "I found her with that young ass, Vickars! More ass myself, for not seeing through things earlier. She was talking to him—alone; looking up at him—quite pathetically! The look I know. Didn't suppose other men knew it, too!" with a rough laugh.

"You don't mean that he has—that he was——"

"I don't know what he had done or meant to do. Except that he had her hand in his, and that she let him take a flower from her, and looked at him with—— That's enough! I told her that I understood, and that she was free—that they might carry out their programme. Mind, I don't wish to hear any more about this. It is done, and we will settle down to our old way of life."

"But, Hugo!" Maud felt dismayed. That the engagement should somehow come to nothing had been her most ardent desire, yet now that she had her wish, she could only feel distressed and unhappy. She did not like his look, or his report of what had passed. Neither were what she had been used to in Hugo. He seemed almost to be another man; different from and inferior to the brother whom she loved.

"Are you sure it is true?" she asked. "I mean, may there not be some mistake?"

"How can there be? You told me plainly that things were so. If *you* had not warned me I might have doubted—might have felt some hope. But this confirms what you said."

Then the main responsibility rested with her. "Would you like me to see Rosina for you?" she faltered.

"No. I wish you to do nothing. You need not mention Rosina's name again. And," with another brusque laugh, "you need

not prate to me any more about the trustworthiness of women. I have learnt my lesson, and I shall not forget it. If you have nothing more to say, I should very much prefer to be alone."

"Will you not come and see my mother?"

"Not now."

He held the door open for Maud, and when she was outside he closed it heavily. She saw no more of him till dinner-time, and then he was cold, hard, punctilious, silent.

CHAPTER IX.

STILL WANTED.

A week went by, and matters remained unchanged. To all appearance, the rupture was a final one.

Certain letters had passed between the two houses, but the sky had not been cleared thereby. Rosina's gentle little note made less impression upon Hugo, than, rather strangely, it did upon Maud. Hugo, having once made up his mind, was not to be easily moved; while Maud was in a state of restless inquietude and self-reproach, which meant being swayed by every breath of wind. Rosina acquiesced in the broken engagement, merely stating that Hugo was mistaken in what he thought, but adding that no doubt things had better be as he suggested. She offered no definite explanation, since Hugo had asked for none; and neither she nor anyone else alluded in plain terms to Vickars.

Maud fully expected a wrathful epistle from the doctor or his wife; but none came. Or, at least, she heard of none. Hugo had passed into a mood of stern reserve. He did just show her the one little note from Rosina; and then he declined further speech on the subject. Although his health was unaffected, and his appetite remained as usual, he looked unhappy, and was for the most part moodily silent, with no smile for anyone except his mother. When she should be better he meant to leave home for some weeks, but at present he could not well get

away. Mrs. Auckland was perpetually asking for him.

Also her strong desire for Rosina continued, seeming only to grow with opposition. It was useless to explain to her that Rosina could not come, and that she ought not to worry Hugo. For the moment she might submit, but the piteous appeal soon began again, and Maud was often sick at heart with the sound of that recurring "Want — want — daughter!" Her speech was to some extent clearer, and the command of words had increased. It became evident to Maud that her mother, despite weakness and dimmed faculties, read her son's state of mind, and definitely connected his depression with Rosina. Though Mrs. Auckland could not have explained her own sequence of ideas, she probably had sense to argue that the coming of Rosina would make him happy, and, therefore, she wished it. With her feeble left hand she would pat his cheek, looking at him wistfully, as only a mother can look on the child whom she loves, and tears would fill her old eyes. Hugo would put on a cheerful manner, but he was powerless to veil from her his real mood; and when he got up little jokes for her benefit, she was not deceived. She would only shake her head mournfully, and again beg for Rosina.

A fortnight passed, and matters drew to a crisis. Mrs. Auckland was not so well, and the doctor spoke seriously to Maud as to the probable results of this continued fretting. If her mother could not have her wish, another stroke might be before long expected. There were doubtful symptoms. Would it be possible to persuade Miss Lustring to look in, if but for ten minutes? The doctor knew of the severed engagement, but, of course, he had nothing to do with that. He simply had to say what was needful for his patient. She had begun now crying and even screaming for Rosina; and nothing could be worse than such excitement.

"But it is extraordinary," Maud observed.

"My mother did not take to Miss Lustring. She opposed the engagement."

"That may be what troubles her. Seeing your brother not quite himself, she, perhaps, counts herself to blame, and wishes to undo the past." So the doctor had arrived at much the same conclusion as Maud had done.

Maud resolved to act independently. To ask Hugo's leave might only be to court refusal. With her mother's life in the balance, she could hardly be wrong to do aught in her power. Perhaps, also, she might find an opportunity to set matters right between Rosina and Hugo. Something in the tone of Rosina's reticent little note had left her with a haunting dread,—what if, after all, she had been mistaken in her surmise? What if she had misled Hugo, and, without sufficient cause, had prepared his mind for a hasty and wrong decision? During many days a half-formed idea had been in her mind that she might look into the matter for him; that, if Rosina were blameless, she might find it possible, even if only at the cost of self-abasement, to bring the two together again. Strong as had been her dislike to the engagement, something else was stronger still, and that was her dread of having acted an unjust part of having poisoned Hugo's happiness. If she meant to do aught, the sooner the better, and here lay her chance.

That same afternoon, when going out, as she did every day if but for a turn, Maud had the little governess-cart, and drove herself over alone to the Lustrings'.

"Would you ask Miss Lustring if she could kindly see me for a few minutes?" she said at the door, keenly aware that Mrs. Lustring was peering at her from the drawing-room window. "I do not think she will refuse me. It is an urgent matter."

The girl showed her into an empty drawing-room, Mrs. Lustring having whisked herself away through a further door. Maud had to wait a good ten minutes before Mrs. Lustring appeared, in a purple silk gown, crookedly put on. Her lips were pursed, her eyes were twinkling with expectation.

Maud bowed, finding Mrs. Lustring indisposed to shake hands. "I should be glad of a few words with Rosina," she said.

Mrs. Lustring pursed up her lips anew. "Rosina is out," she replied, with unwonted brevity.

"Can you tell me where I might find her?"

"No, Miss Auckland, I can't."

The two women faced each other, neither wearing her most agreeable expression.

"I wish for this interview for Rosina's own sake, as well as for mine," Maud said gravely. "And—for my brother's, though he does not know that I have come."

"Oh, as for Rosina—she hasn't any need to go after anybody. Not your brother, nor anybody else. *She* won't be at a loss, I can assure you. Mr. Auckland isn't the only man in the whole world who'd like to marry Rosina."

Maud was silent.

"But as you *are* here, Miss Auckland, I may as well just say that things have been very queer—very queer indeed, and I'm sure one wouldn't have expected it of your brother. I did think he was a gentleman."

"Perhaps you had better be a little careful what you say," Maud observed, slowly. "My brother's action was entirely due to his belief——"

"Yes, of course. I quite understand. But that doesn't explain how he came to treat my poor little girl in such a wicked, shameful, heartless sort of way!"

"Was entirely caused by his belief——"

"Yes. I know exactly what you mean to say, Miss Auckland, and I say it's a sin and a shame of any man to treat a poor girl like that!"

"His belief that your daughter was not only in love with Mr. Vickars, but was also allowing him openly to make love to her," persisted Maud.

"Oh, of course; I understand. Anybody might accuse anyone else of anything, when they just want an excuse to break off. And I say he'd no reason whatever for thinking any such nonsense—none in the world."

reiterated Mrs. Lustring, her cheeks the colour of a turkey-cock's comb, exactly matching her neck-ribbon. "And I say, too, it's a good thing it's all over. Rosina is much too good a girl to be thrown away on such——"

"I think you had better not finish your sentence," suggested Maud, in modulated tones. Mrs. Lustring tossed her head, but did not finish the sentence.

"And what's more, it won't be long before you hear of something else. I can tell you that! Rosina isn't going to break her heart for nothing, nor to be an old maid neither. Mr. Vickars will take care of that."

"Ah! then there was truth in it after all, and Hugo was right," murmured Maud. "I might as well have stayed away."

Mrs. Lustring became abruptly conscious of a blunder, and for at least six seconds she had nothing more to say. Then a change in her face made Maud turn, to find Rosina by her side, quiet and pale, with steady blue eyes looking from one to the other.

"What were you saying, mother?" the girl asked.

"Mrs. Lustring was merely informing me, as I understood, of your approaching marriage with Mr. Vickars." Maud spoke seriously, but with no trace of resentment towards Rosina, for whom, at the moment, she felt only pity. Mrs. Lustring tried in vain to cut her short. Maud finished what she had to say, and Rosina heard.

"Well, it won't be Mr. Vickars' fault anyway, if you don't, Rosie," declared Mrs. Lustring.

No answer, and no explanation came. Rosina simply stood motionless. It was Maud who asked, "Will you give me a few minutes—alone?"

"Yes. Upstairs, please."

"Now, Rosina, if you go and knuckle down to those people——" But Rosina did not wait to hear the end of this sentence. She passed quickly out of hearing, leading the way to her own little barely-furnished domain on the next floor. There she paused for

Maud to walk in first, followed, locked the door, offered a chair, and again stood dumbly waiting. Maud declined the seat, and she, too, waited. It became a question who should speak first. Rosina, however, showed no signs of doing so. Her small mouth remained firmly closed. Maud studied her for some seconds, realising that here was a new aspect of the girl, never before apparent. Also it dawned upon her that, since she herself had requested the interview, she was the one who should rightly break this silence.

CHAPTER X.

THE SPACES FILLED UP.

"I came on business," Maud at length said, choosing her words carefully. "Not from my brother, but without his knowledge. He



HER FACE QUIVERED.

might have consented; I do not know. I did not ask him. Perhaps I did not wish to give him a chance of saying No. It seemed just possible that I might be able to do something—towards setting matters right, I mean. If there is any mistake, I might be able. He looks very sad."

"What business?" Rosina asked.

"You know that my mother is still very ill. The last few days she has had a strong wish, which we have not been able to gratify. The doctor says that she ought to have what she wants, or the worry may bring on another stroke. She wishes to see you."

"To see me!" This was the last thing Rosina would have expected.

"She has been wanting it for some time. When Hugo called on you last, he came for the purpose of telling you this, and of taking you back with him."

Rosina flushed a little. "To see her! Why should she wish it? She is not fond of me."

"We think—*I* and the doctor, too—that she knows Hugo to be unhappy, and that she wishes for what would comfort him."

"No; it could not be that. Not if she wanted me then—before he came last time."

"Yes, even then. He was not happy, and I am sure she saw it. He had begun to suspect—"

"Why should he?"

Rosina stood very still, facing Maud, and only a slight nervous movement of her lips betrayed that she was less calm below the surface.

"There were circumstances which we could not understand." A question was thrusting itself forward in Maud's mind; should she confess her own share in the matter? For Hugo's sake, and because she should see it to be right and necessary, she might resolve to do so; but the step was acutely repellent to her, and she was still doubtful as to the true state of affairs between Rosina and Vickers.

"What circumstances?" Rosina seemed determined to say as little as possible.

Maud sent a quick glance over the past. She was perplexed at her own condition of mind. Standing thus before Rosina, looking into the quiet blue eyes, she somehow could not believe that Rosina had been false to Hugo. She found herself unexpectedly allied on the girl's side, ready even to enter on her defence.

"Rosina, will you tell me frankly—will you treat me as a sister—is there any truth in what Hugo imagined? Is it all a miserable mistake?"

Rosina flushed again, and again grew pale. She turned away, walking to the window, where she stood for some little time, gazing through the dusty panes. When she came back she wore a look of resolution.

"Yes," she said, under her breath—"yes, I will treat you as a sister. I do think you mean kindly, and I have no one else to advise me—no one who really knows. My mother is too angry, and my father—he wants something else. Will you tell me truly; if you were in my place, and if the man you were engaged to marry had cast you off without even asking a word of explanation—if he had just cast you off on a bare suspicion, you know—could *you* explain all to his sister, if he had not sent her—if he had not even said he was sorry? Could you, do you think?"

This was turning the tables indeed. Maud was stricken dumb. She stood looking into the fair childish face, which had never seemed to her so little childish before. Rosina did not flinch. The simple blue eyes met her gaze steadily.

"I'm very stupid in some things," Rosina went on, after a break. "They all say I'm so young, you know. But I think I have grown older lately. And I do want to do whatever is right. If *you* think I ought to explain it all now—to you, I mean—if you are sure that *you* would do so in my place, then I will tell you everything. Every single thing."

Maud had not looked for this—had not pictured any such appeal. She had regarded the whole question hitherto only from her own side and from that of Hugo. She had applied to Rosina a different standard of judgment altogether from that which she would have used for herself in similar circumstances. Now she saw Rosina and herself side by side, as two women, to be viewed alike, to be judged alike, to be treated alike. Would she, in Rosina's position, have given the explanation for which she herself

had just asked? No!—a thousand times no!

"You are right," she said huskily. "In your place I would *not*. I would wait—till Hugo himself came."

"Thank you!" murmured the girl.

"But now I must tell you something instead. I have a confession to make, and then you will understand better how it is that Hugo doubted you—perhaps too readily. I am afraid it is partly my fault. That is why I want to do anything in my power to make you both happy again. You see I am taking it for granted that you do care for Hugo, not for Mr. Vickars."

"My mother told you wrongly. She is very much annoyed, and when she is annoyed she does not much mind what she says. I could never marry Mr. Vickars. Never! if he asked me fifty times!" Rosina spoke with energy, forgetting that she was saying precisely what a minute before she had decided not to say. "They want it for me—I mean my father does, and perhaps my mother too. But I could not—I never could!"

"I am glad you have said just so much, because now I know what I am about," Maud seated herself on one edge of the narrow bed and drew down Rosina by her side. "I have something to tell you," she repeated, and, in as few words as might be, she explained how first her suspicions had been aroused, not excusing herself, not denying that the wish might have been largely the father to the thought, not hiding her own jealous love for Hugo, or her past dread of the future order of things; but touching such things lightly, and passing on to the story of the sheet of blotting paper, to which Rosina listened with a puzzled face.

"But I don't understand," the girl said, when Maud had quoted from memory the words she had read, and had also told of her after-talk with Hugo. "I don't understand what I can have said to make things seem like that. Did you keep the paper?"

"Yes; I have it at home."

"May I see it some time? I can't make it out at all. I know which letter you mean. But it did not say what you thought—really it did not. I wrote to Ceely, and she keeps all my letters. She could find it, I dare say."

"You see how much I have had to do with the bother," Maud observed, regretfully. "I am vexed now with myself. And you—do you not feel very angry?"

Rosina looked up in a kind of wonder. "No—I don't think so. Why should I be angry? You did not mean to do harm. I'm only—sorry—if Hugo——"

Her face quivered pitifully. The strain had been almost too much for her. "If Hugo——" she again tried to say, and then she burst into tears. Maud's arm came round her, and she sobbed bitterly.

"Poor child!" murmured Maud.

"It has been so difficult—no one to understand——" Rosina said brokenly. "And Hugo—to think such things! But indeed I have tried——"

"Yes, dear. You have tried——?"

"To be patient, and to wait. I couldn't do anything. I could only pray that things might come right—some day. You see, it was about my father——" forgetting again that she had resolved not to explain. "It was my father being in debt to Mr. Vickars that put everything wrong. That was the beginning. Father was so afraid that if I vexed Mr. Vickars he would insist on repayment at once. So he would not let Mr. Vickars be told of my engagement, and he said I must be very careful and very kind to Mr. Vickars. I did try—and it was so horrid to have to do it. Perhaps if I had been a little older, I would have refused, but I had no one to ask. I didn't dare to say anything to Hugo, because he might have spoken out, and they would have been angry. But I dare say that was wrong and cowardly, and I'm sorry now. I ought to have been more brave. O you are so kind!" as Maud's arm pressed her closely. "I don't mind so much, if you understand. If only Hugo—if only he would not think I *could*——"

"I am going to tell Hugo all that I have told you, and then he will understand too. He does not know about the blotting-paper yet. I have been a coward, too, Rosina, and I did not tell him that. If I had done so, perhaps he would have seen what it was all worth. But I do think your father was wrong."

"Poor father! He is always in difficulties, you know, and he always has been. He borrowed quite a large sum from Mr. Vickars, more than a year ago. We didn't know of it till lately. Father only said that he was in Mr. Vickars' power—he wouldn't tell how—and that if I vexed Mr. Vickars he would be ruined. Mother didn't believe that things were quite so bad, but she said I was to do as I was told. And when I was here I had a letter from Mr. Vickars himself, all about this money that he had lent, and saying that he wanted it back, because he was getting hard up. Of course I could not do anything; it was no use his coming to me; and I wrote and told him so, but it made me very worried. And then he came to see us, and I told him myself all about my engagement, because I couldn't think it right to let things go on so any longer. And I talked to him about my father, and begged him to wait, and not to be hard. He had just promised that he would, and I was thanking him, when—when Hugo came in and found us together. I suppose it was seeing me look pleased—and Mr. Vickars had taken my hand, and was asking me to give him a flower, to remind him of his promise,—I suppose it was all that which made Hugo think what he did. And I dare say it did seem odd—only, if Hugo had just asked—if he had had a little patience——"

"And your father would prefer that you should marry Mr. Vickars?"

"Only because of the money. I suppose he thinks that the debt would not matter then. But it would; it would have to be paid just the same. And I never, never could marry Mr. Vickars. I don't like him."

Then a short pause.

"Rosina—do you think now that you can come and see my mother?"

Once more the girl lifted appealing eyes.

"I'll do what you say is right," she whispered. "You know so much more than I do about—things. Would you go—in my place? If Hugo had not——"

The kiss that came in reply was from Maud's heart. "No," she said; "you shall not come, my dear little sister—not even to my mother!—until Hugo himself brings you."

Five minutes later Maud was on her homeward road, and the fat pony had seldom been urged along at so brisk a pace. Once or twice he made futile endeavours to look round, in a mild wonderment at his mistress' unusual impatience. He had to bestir himself all the same; and Maud reached the house just in time to catch Hugo before he should start for his afternoon ride. She was received in the sombre style which had of late characterised her brother, and Hugo would have departed after three words, but she declined to let him go. She sat down, requested a hearing, and told her tale from beginning to end. Hugo listened without a single comment, which perhaps is more than many men or women would have been equal to. Following upon the story of the blotting-paper, came that of her interview with Rosina an hour earlier.

"Now, say to me whatever you like," she concluded. "You have heard me out nicely, and I am very much obliged. And you have not scolded me either, for acting without your leave. I think now that you will wish to go again and see Rosina. And—if I have had to beg your pardon, you will still more have to beg hers!"

Hugo turned to look into her face; and in that moment Maud learnt what Rosina was to him. She saw, too, why he had not interrupted her sooner, as he might have been expected to do. She held out her hand, and he wrung it.

"I have been very foolish," she confessed, with moisture on her eyelashes. "But at least there was some little reason for our

suspicions. And I can say now that I know Rosina—as I have not known her before. I suppose you will not mind a rather cool reception from Mrs. Lustring.”

“That woman——!”

Maud laughed. “Your mother-in-law that is to be. You will have to put up with her.”

Three hours later Hugo drove up to the front door, with Rosina by his side. The first glimpse of those two joyous faces brought from Maud a whispered breath of gratitude: “Thank God that I have not been allowed to spoil both their lives!”

“It’s all right,” Hugo said gaily. He jumped down, and gave Maud a hearty kiss. “All right! I’ve brought her home for a week, straight off.” In an undertone he added—“Thought it best to get her out of their way. Queer crew!—but they mean to leave the neighbourhood. Like London better: and I have offered to take their house off the doctor’s hands, for a good sum. He caught at the offer!” Then aloud—“Rosina is going to help in nursing the mother. She and I think you look tired.”

He led Rosina himself into the sick-room. Mrs. Auckland had just awakened out of sleep, and was as usual fretfully insisting upon something, which had been construed into a demand for Rosina. When the two appeared, her old face brightened, and she looked eagerly at Hugo.

“My—dear—daughter!” she said.

“Yes, mother—your daughter. This is to be my little wife, and your little girl. She will be a good daughter to you,” declared Hugo. Mrs. Auckland smiled, and dropped asleep again, with her hand clasped in Rosina’s.

Half-an-hour later Maud found them in another room. “There is no need now,” she remarked—“but this is what you wanted to see, dear.”

“And this is what I promised to show you.” Rosina made answer, taking an envelope out of her pocket. “It is what I wrote to Cecy.”

That portion of the letter, which had been partly and misleadingly visible on the blotting

paper, ran in the original document as follows:—

“I did at first find the old lady rather dreadful, but she is kinder now, and I don’t think I do dislike her at all, though I am a little afraid of her still perhaps. Hugo’s sister is kind in a way, at least I think she means to be, and sometimes I do wish I didn’t feel so shy and strange with her. But I try not to think of myself, or to let Hugo see



INTO THE SICK ROOM.

what I feel, for everything is settled, and it is of no use. I am very happy, you know, and Hugo is such a dear! Only think, Mr. Vickars has written to me, saying that father is in debt to him, and he wants to be repaid. As if I could do anything! It worries me dreadfully, but please, dear Cecy, don’t say one word of this to *anybody*. Father would be so vexed, and I can’t help it. It is dreadfully difficult to know what to do, but I have written a few words. Mr. Vickars doesn’t seem to know yet of my engagement, and my father promised to tell him about it. I have been thinking of him all day long—of father,

A FAMOUS ADVENTURER.

I mean—wondering what can be done about that money; so sad, isn't it? If only things were different! And now I must tell you what a nice time I am having, and how good Hugo is to me."

"It was very silly of me to write all that," Rosina said softly. "But I didn't know Maud then, as I do now!"

THE END.

A FAMOUS ADVENTURER.

By MRS. ORPEN.



THE men born in the sixteenth century enjoyed great opportunities. They came into possession of a new heaven and a new

earth. The Reformation and America! What an unfolding before the eyes of a young generation! We can hardly realise the vast field for enterprise and imagination laid open by the knowledge that there was a New World beyond the western seas. We now know the world so well. It has been weighed and measured and analysed by experts, strapped and belted round by electricity, so that there are no overwhelming surprises left for future generations. Only fancy the freshness of a world where it is possible to mistake the sunlight on the yellow sandy cliffs of Roanoke for headlands of pure gold! It was worth while to be an adventurer in the brave days of old, and it was respectable, too. An adventurer, according to the ideas of those times, was a man, presumably young, certainly brave, who adventured his life

against the queen's enemies, in the hope of making his way in the world. Pearls captured from a Spanish galleon after a desperate fight become more valued as trophies even than as jewels; they were symbols of heroism, pluck, and endurance; a sort of Victoria Cross of three centuries back. Scarred and bronzed sea-captains wore them as fighting men and not as fops. It was an honour to wear a thousand pounds worth of pearls on your hat, and to have men know that you had won them at the point of the sword, on a blood-stained deck off the Azores.

Walter Raleigh, who spelled his name in a dozen different ways, but never in the manner which the world has now adopted, was born just at the right moment to be an adventurer, namely, in 1552. He came of good sturdy Devonshire stock, and retained through life a good sturdy Devonshire burr to his tongue. A big man he was, close upon six feet high, with strong active limbs and a very high forehead, which held a very keen and energetic brain. A disposition to follow in beaten tracks sent young Walter to Oxford when he was sixteen, but a disposition to fight his own way in the world sent him to France when he was seventeen, as a volunteer in the wars of religion. It was a good school for one who wanted to learn soldiering, and a still better school for a man who wanted to harden his heart to bear the roughest details of the profession. He stayed at this school for six years, and then, after brief interval, went to Ireland, where he made abundant use of what he had learned.

It was in 1579 that Raleigh, being just twenty-seven years of age, took service in Ireland, as Captain of a troop of a hundred men. He scorned the service, and would as soon herd sheep, he contemptuously declares, only that it might lead to something better. For the moment, however, Ireland served as a soldier's workshop, failing his wider schemes and wilder adventures against the Spaniard, which the queen failed to countenance. Ireland was, of course, in a state of

rebellion—she always was in some quarter or other. At this particular moment it was the Desmonds who were up in arms, ravaging Munster with fire and sword. Raleigh was a good commander, very mindful of the lives of his soldiers, and observing that it was the practice of the Irish rebels to flock into each English camp the moment the main body of soldiers had left, in order to kill off the stragglers, he laid a trap for them. Thus, on one occasion, at Pathkeale, when the army marched out, the kerns marched in to deal with the stragglers, but instead of stragglers they found Raleigh more than ready to deal with them.

"What are those withies for, you've got on your shoulder?" asked Raleigh.

"To hang up English churls with," answered the Irishman.

"They'll do as well for an Irish kern," said Raleigh, and forthwith he had the man strung up.

This story appears with comments in some histories. There is no comment to be made—it was war. The Irishman would have hung the Englishman if he had been strong enough; he was not, and so got hung himself instead. The scales of cruelty don't dip on either side, but balance very exactly—it was war, and that is the way they waged it in the sixteenth century.

Raleigh was a gallant soldier and a brave man, and as such his anger was roused against those shiftiy rebels who stirred up others to fight while keeping themselves safe and sound in the background. Ireland has frequently been afflicted with this degraded type of coward. One Barry, of Barry Court, in Cork, was for some reason or other considered by him to be an example of the species, so forth Raleigh rode to

Dublin to urge the Lord-Deputy to deal severely with him. On his way home, he, with some carelessness, fell into an ambuscade, but fought his way out again right gallantly.

This is how it chanced.

Fitz-Edmund, seneschal of Imokilly, an enemy, heard of Raleigh's being on the road with few attendants, some say only seven. He determined to intercept him at the ford of the Blackwater, and for this purpose assembled many followers, some say even sixty. Raleigh, riding ahead of his troop, perceived the danger, and made a furious dash for the river, getting safely across. But one, Henry Moile, a faithful Devonshire follower, fell in mid-stream, and was like to be captured. He called loudly upon his captain to come to his rescue, and Raleigh, turning back, held the ford against the foe until the distressed Moile could scramble to horse again. The exploit shows very well for Raleigh, and not very creditably for him of Imokilly with his sixty kerns; however, there may have been extenuating circumstances of which we are ignorant. At any rate, Raleigh's gallantry was just of the sort to catch his soldiers' fancy, and hold their attention. Such deeds from captain to soldier were paid for



BLACKWATER, NEAR YOUGHAL.

in kind by soldier to captain. We read in the account of one of the endless fights with the Barrys, of how it was that Raleigh's horse was killed, and of how, consequently, the captain himself would have been slain only that Nicholas Wright, a Yorkshireman, came gallantly to the rescue, and never stayed from charging the foe full valourously until the captain had got himself a fresh horse, and was thus able to escape. It must, moreover, not be forgotten that Raleigh's Irish followers were every whit as loyal to him as were his Englishmen, cleaving to him as against all other Irishmen in a way which is only seen among a people who are imbued with the spirit of the clan rather than that of the nation.

Another of Raleigh's exploits, but one which does not read so prettily, was his capture of Lord and Lady Roche. This noble couple were "vehemently suspected of disloyalty," why, or by whom, we do not now know, nor does it matter. Bold Captain Raleigh undertook to bring them into Cork. It seemed a sufficiently rash venture to go with only ninety soldiers and carry off an Irish chieftain and his spouse right from the very midst of their hundreds of retainers. But Raleigh knew his English soldiers, and he also knew the Irish kern. Leaving Cork at eleven o'clock at night, he arrived at Roche's castle just at daybreak, and placed his ninety men at the strategic points of the village. This was nicely accomplished about the time the kerns began to wake up. Then, with a few gentlemen, Raleigh entered the castle and informed Lord Roche that he was practically a prisoner, and this in his own house with his own followers around him. He endeavoured to parley, but Raleigh was there for other things than disputations, so the pair had to come off forthwith to Cork. It was a villainous night of rain and storm, such as Cork furnishes in abundance, but they all got back alive, and no one was hurt except one soldier, who fell off his horse into a mud-hole. It is a comfort to learn that Lord and Lady Roche were found to be

soundly loyal, and that, after a winter in Cork, they were permitted to return to the noisy and inefficient protection of their numerous kerns.

Raleigh was present at the affair at Smerwick, a fact which, in the eyes of historians unaccustomed to history, has tarnished his memory past all redemption. Smerwick, which is on the extreme west of Kerry, was a hastily fortified camp, where a mixed force of Spaniards and Italians was landed in order to help Desmond in his rising. They were besieged, and seeing their case hopeless, made an unconditional surrender. The officers were held to ransom, and the common soldiers, to the number of four hundred, were put to the sword. Raleigh was one of the officers in command of the soldiers who did "this great execution." As in all likelihood he had more than once seen similar results follow an unconditional surrender during his apprenticeship in France, we need not be surprised that he never seems to have been particularly shocked at the occurrence. War was savagely made in the sixteenth century. Witness the deeds, on one side and the other, of the long struggle in the Netherlands. Raleigh was not a cruel man, and in his dealings with the American Indians he showed himself to be in advance of his times. To judge him by the standards of to-day is as unfair as it is foolish. How shall we show as regards civilisation if in the year of grace 2,200 historians decide to judge us by their enlightened standards?

Raleigh's services deserved a reward, and it would not have been inappropriate to pay him out of Desmond's own lands for helping to destroy the race of Desmond. He undoubtedly received the grant of an immense tract of land along the banks of the beautiful Blackwater, where it runs along by wooded slopes down to the sea at Youghal. But some there be who assert that he got his grant, not because he was an energetic soldier, but because he was a handsome man who caught the queen's fancy. At any rate he got some thousands of acres in the fairest

part of Ireland, and on the hill overlooking the walled town of Youghal he built himself a house, which has not its mate within the four seas of Ireland. Not that it is a large house nor an imposing one—far from it—but it is a cosy, comfortable, and pretty house, totally unlike the dismal stone castles that other people built in Ireland in those days. It is such a house as a man of taste would choose to live in to-day, with its beautiful carved panels, its deep-seated bay windows, and its wide, gentle stairs. It is not the house of a fighting man, but of a poet. We can almost see him sitting beside the vast chimney-piece, his wise brow filled with schemes and projects of widest daring, while the flickering firelight glints and flashes from the pearls and rubies on his doublet. The details of the intricate carving are lost in the gloom of the dark oak ceiling—perhaps it was not so dark in Raleigh's time—but in the uncertain firelight, where he must have often sat and meditated, it was unfathomable even to his keen eye. How often he must have sat looking at visions in the shadowy ceiling—visions of new worlds beyond the western sea, which he was to conquer and lay at his sovereign's feet. In his saddest moments, however, his fancy never conjured up that darkest picture of all, the block on Tower Hill.

Or would we play with lighter fancies.

Then think of him sitting in the deep bay window reading his poems aloud to Spenser, and hearing in return the "Faerie Queen," while the mellow light plays in diamond patches upon the floor, and the faithful Wright sits without, in the low-ceiled passage, intent upon peaceful service with the master at whose side he fought in many a fierce field. There is a tradition that Spenser visited Raleigh at Youghal. Some say it is a

tradition without due and adequate historic basis. Far be it from me, however, to turn those poets out of their quiet seat in the sunny window; dimly shadowed they shall sit on undisturbed by my hand imbued in ruthless historic lore.

Even after the lapse of three centuries, the first sight of Raleigh's house causes a thrill of delighted surprise to the spectator, coming upon it, as he does, after a dreary walk through the grim and dirty streets of Youghal, with their rows of hopeless grey stone houses. Clad in ivy, embowered in myrtle, the house faces the sunshine, when there is any, and its tall slender chimneys at the back give an indescribable grace to what might otherwise be called too squat a building. The myrtles, which gave the name of Myrtle Lodge to the house, are said to have been killed by the severe winter two years ago. We will hope that, as they must have survived many a sharp frost since the day when Raleigh planted them, they will, even yet, spring up anew from the root and flourish once more beside the door of the house they decorated so fittingly. Over against the door, not twenty steps away, is an arbour of darkest yews whose thick-spreading branches could defy a tropical sun.



RALEIGH'S HOUSE AT YOUGHAL, FRONT.



OAK MANTELPIECE IN SITTING-ROOM.

Here tradition has again seated Raleigh to smoke that historic pipe of his, which the over-zealous servant put out with a jugful of ale, only—and this is odd—tradition has for once turned teetotaler, and says it was a jugful of water that was used to quench the conflagration. There is a pump hard by upon which legend places her finger, saying, "Lo, the spot whence that jugful of water was drawn."

Behind the house, in his little garden, Raleigh first planted those fatally prolific tubers which have done something to enervate the Irish character. The potato, growing easily anywhere, was like the bread-fruit to the population lazily depending upon it for sole sustenance. It came as a blessing and stayed as a curse, for it does not do for mankind to get his food too easily. There, too, he planted the yellow wall-flowers, which he brought from the Azores, and which now seem like weeds, for the vigour with which they grow.

The taste of the times, and his sovereign's vanity, caused Raleigh to expend himself in writing love-poems to the Queen. All the handsome courtiers had to do it, and he did it better than most, and kept on doing it with impassioned energy and considerable poetic skill for years upon years. It makes one smile to think of sonnets to Queen Elizabeth's cheek, when we reflect that the royal cheek was fifty years old and thickly painted withal.

They must have had a somewhat deficient sense of fun in those days, or possibly it was only their sense of loyalty which was abnormally developed.

In 1589 Raleigh seems to have been in disgrace. It was a foretaste of the future. At all events he retired to his pretty house at Youghal, and busied himself with his Irish estates. He was not happy there, however. He pined to get away from Ireland, which he looked upon as a land of exile. His lofty ambition and exuberant energy found but a poor outlet in planting potatoes and tending wall-flowers, in the intervals of tobacco smoking. He longed to be back again in the struggle; he sighed for the glitter of the Court and the glare of the battle-field. In the "Faerie Queen" and its author he thought he detected what might be pleasing to Elizabeth, for with all her woman's whims she was a great sovereign, and, with unerring sagacity, favoured those whose genius was to make her and her reign illustrious. It is difficult to make out what was exactly the course pursued, for a poet's fanciful imagery is too intermittent and too dazzling a beacon by which to steer the sober course of history. If we are to read Spenser as he is usually interpreted, it was Raleigh who introduced him to the Queen.

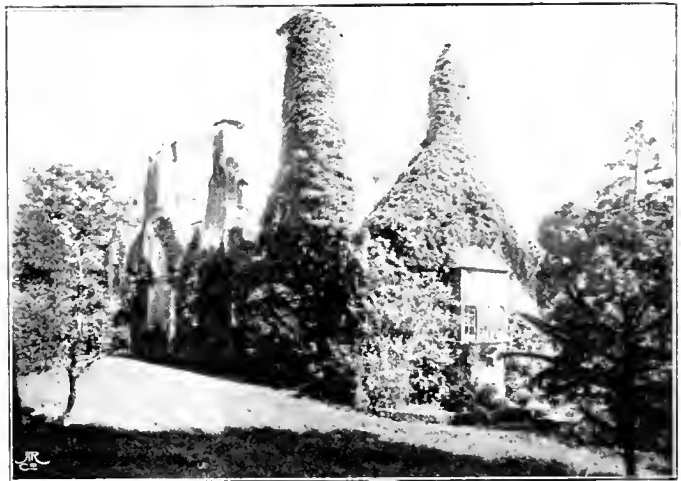
"The Shepherd of the Ocean"—quoeth he—
 "Unto that Goddess grace me first enhanced,
 And to my oaten pipe inclined her ear."

"Shepherd of the Ocean" was, of course, Raleigh, a title which was appropriate enough to the bold navigator and valiant enemy of Spain. The "Goddess" was equally, of

course, Elizabeth, a title which seemed more appropriate in Spenser's day than in our own. In 1591 Raleigh left his peaceful home on the banks of the Blackwater, and did not again live there. His restless eyes were ever turning towards the West, where he saw empires rising before his eager imagination. It is not our purpose to follow him in his stormy career. His brief residence at Youghal was but a pause in the hurry of his life; a restful interlude, when he perhaps gained energy for higher flights of ambition and glory. Viewed as such, the house, charming in itself, is endowed with yet a deeper interest. The vivid personality of the man, his indomitable energy, his courage in defeat, his very lavishness in prosperity, were all typical of the age in which he lived. These were the qualities which went to make up an adventurer in the old meaning of the word, and the adventurers went to make up the British Empire. They had not the petty vices of to-day, nor the still more petty virtues. They were a brave, breezy race, and it was seldom that the same man could show himself to be poet, statesman, soldier, sailor, fine gentleman, courtier, discoverer, historian, as could Raleigh, the most brilliant, successful, and unfortunate of all the Adventurers.

The old house at Youghal had a great escape a few years ago, not from fire—the usual fate of old houses—but from capture. It was the year before the Chicago Exhibition, when American commissioners went up and down through the land, seeking what they might buy up. They cast greedy eyes upon the historic building, and offered a round sum

for it, intending to carry it to Chicago bit by bit, there to add it to the thousand and one sights of the show. The then owners of the house, being not wealthy, were tempted by the money and might have sold it, only the Corporation of Youghal stepped in and forbade the sale. It seems that the house was under a quit rent of a shilling a year to the Corporation of Youghal, and Youghal very properly refused to sanction the carrying away of its most interesting building. So it remains on the hill overlooking the harbour, to the delight of all beholders. It is possible that this house may ere long be the only fragment left to us of all Raleigh owned, or dreamed of conquering. We have lost the Virginia which he named and tried to colonise. That gold-bearing region near the Orinoco called Guiana we may be arbitrated out of, and this was the last of the many lands



RALEIGH'S HOUSE FROM THE GARDEN.

he tried so hard to add to the English crown. Let us, therefore, guard with vigilant care the least of his belongings—the little house in Youghal.

LETTERS TO A DEBUTANTE BY A WOMAN OF THE WORLD.

ON THE CHOICE OF LITERATURE.

ALBEIT the training and early education of a woman lies in her parents' hands; the final result of that education as success or failure rests with the girl. From the time she comes to years of discretion and develops the critical faculty, it remains for her to decide whether her taste in literature shall be sound or the reverse. If she allow a weak and worthless species of writing to amuse her, if she become habituated to slipshod sentences, to ungrammatical phrases, to want of beauty as regards style, she soon loses the just sense of value, which renders a page of Pater or Ruskin an exquisite delight. To have something worth saying, and to say that well, is no mean feat. To be blind to felicities of expression and beauty of language in a book, is as great a loss as physical blindness where a beautiful landscape is concerned. To be unconscious of subtlety of thought, or of truthful portrayal of character, is as bad a thing as to lack humour. A mind fed on vapid, colourless fiction feebly expressed, on exaggerated sentiments, false pictures of life, and sensationalism, deteriorates, so that fiction of literary merit becomes distasteful to it. Just as it is necessary that a painter should be trained to highest and purest ideals in his art, so the man or woman who would become truly cultivated should strive to keep his or her literary taste pure. The artist who communes with Botticelli, Raphael, and Giotto, will no more stoop to the meretricious in his art than the mind which appreciates Homer, Shakspeare, Bunyan, Milton, and Dante can descend to the third-rate in literature. To become an epicure in one's reading is essential to the keen intellectual enjoyment of literary food. If the palate be in proper health and retain its native delicacy of taste, gross coarse food will be as disagreeable to it as that which lacks flavour.

Sensational literature may be an occasional anodyne to weariness of the flesh, and it has its uses and application; but if we accustom ourselves to much of it, by degrees solid literature loses its power of entertainment, and we crave for reading which gives us less trouble to understand. The average *débutante* having left nursery or schoolroom behind her, finds herself as unfettered in the choice of her mental diet as she is in her bodily food. If, as regards the latter, she elect to live on caviare, truffles, and sweetmeats, we all know what the ultimate result will be to her digestion. Should she take as her mental fare fashion papers, society journals, and trashy novels, her mental digestion must suffer; since it requires a robust and well-balanced intellectual system to assimilate such food. Starvation of the mind is as disastrous in its consequences as starvation of the body. It is safer to give a child an able, if coarse, book than a foolish one. What is gross in "Tom Jones," "Amelia," "Tristram Shandy," and "Gulliver's Travels," is not perceptible to the innocent mind of a child. Whereas Squire Western, Corporal Trim, Uncle Toby, and the Liliputians remain life-long and valuable possessions. The dross falls away, the gold remains. There is something virile and natural in the three characters I have named, but the utterly insipid dummies which do duty for people in the pages of the average young person's book neither instruct nor amuse. Fed on pap, it is small wonder if children's minds become flabby and their natural intelligence deteriorates. "The Fairechild Family" and "Sandford and Merton" of the days of our grandfathers lacked virility as much as any goody-goody book of to-day. In the direction of boys' books there has been a marked improvement of recent years, and fine, manly, stirring tales of the sea and sword, of sport and travel, cannot fail to rouse noble impulses. Literature has, however, taken the girl into small account, and I know of no living writer who has done much to lighten the darkness in which she dwells.

Of all writers for children of the present age there is none more exquisitely pathetic without maudlin tendency, more humorous without coarseness, than Juliana Horatia Ewing. Take, for example, the manly, beautiful character of "Jackanapes," in its perfect naturalness and truth. The brave, unselfish, human boy in his gradual development into the chivalrous gentleman, who, unconscious of having done more than his plain duty, dies like a hero. The certain fate of death which overtakes all aggravatingly good children in a particular species of book is not here. "Jackanapes" is no unnatural saint-like child, but a delightful little sinner who tries to be good and ends by being great. The moral is obvious to the most ordinary intelligence, and surely a noble lesson is thereby taught. Apart from the didactic qualities of Mrs. Ewing's books, her style is charming and her English irreproachable.

Hitherto, I have dealt with the question of literature chiefly from an aesthetic point of view. The problem of books viewed from an ethical standpoint is still more important. If we would keep ourselves morally clean and wholesome, we avoid contact with those of low minds and light repute. Books, therefore, standing in the relation of friends to the people who love them, it behoves us all to be eclectic; and as the contact of mud defiles, so gross subjects and indelicate allusions in a book injure the fine modesty which ought to be a woman's most treasured possession. A steady course of French novels, and not a few English ones of the same stamp, would soon rub off the maiden bloom from any girl's mind. By careless reading the *débutante* injures herself mentally and morally far more than she imagines possible. From the low standpoint of worldly wisdom and expediency she does herself incalculable harm. No charm she can throw over the masculine mind is so potent as that of innocence and purity. The antithesis of the ideal feminine is the coarse-minded woman who can tell *risqué* tales without a blush and talk of subjects she ought to be ashamed to

mention. It is no doubt "smart" and fashionable just now to tell broad stories and indulge in *doubles entendres*. Those who can blush at the license of tongue which shocks them, are spoken of as "provincial" or "middle-class," nevertheless there is nothing to be ashamed of in a pure mind and modest ears; and despite the sneers of the "smart," no real great lady is without self-respect, dignity, and modesty. Our Sovereign has ever set an example in this respect, as in every other.

To come to the practical consideration of literature suitable for young girls, apart from history, science, or biography, I know of no books more delightful, more humorous, more healthy in tone than Jane Austen's. Is not Mr. Collins, the tuft-hunting, obsequious, ignoble parson, a creation fit to rank with any author's. Pompous, vain Sir Walter Elliot of Kellynch Hall, arrogant Lady Catherine de Bourgh, foolish Mrs. Elton, delightful, faulty, irresistible Emma, sprightly Elizabeth Bennet, charming Fanny Price, sweet Anne Elliott, do we not in turn live, and love, and laugh with them all. Then how true to life are Maria Edgeworth's sketches of character in "Castle Rackrent" and "Tales of Fashionable Life," in "Ennui" and "Ormond"! Who has not heard of a modern Almeria Turnbull, one that, in her ambitious ascent of the social ladder, ruthlessly tramples on former friends? How fertile the invention, how delicious the humour to be found throughout Maria Edgeworth's novels! Sir Walter Scott wrote of "the rich humour, pathetic tenderness, and admirable tact" of her Irish books. Indeed, it was the example of Maria Edgeworth which first fired him with the desire to do for Scotland what the Irish-woman had accomplished for Ireland.

To go farther back in the genesis of novels let me counsel my *débutante*, if she should not yet have read "Evelina" or "Cecilia," to lose no time in making the acquaintance of Mrs. and Miss Mirvan, Madame Duval, the vulgar Brangtons, Sir Clement

Willoughby, Lord Orville, and Mr. and Mrs. Hurrell, the Delville's, the Harley's, and Mr. Briggs. Mrs. Inchbald's "A Simple Story" and Mrs. Opie's "Henry Woodville," "Mrs. Arlington," "The Ruffian Boy," and other tales, are valuable, if only for the insight they give us into former days, and manners and customs now fallen into disuse.

Mrs. Radcliffe, in her "Romance of the Forest" and "The Mysteries of Udolpho" shews descriptive powers of a high order. Of a certainty no fiction can surpass the glorious Waverley Novels; but I have heard even "Ivanhoe" described as "dull" in this year of Grace, 1897! All the same there can be no question of the supernal relation in which Scott's novels stand to the average romance. There may be a renaissance of enthusiasm for his genius, but at the present moment the works of Marion Crawford and Marie Corelli are more to the mind of the modern maiden than the stately and powerful novels which entranced the imagination of her grandfathers. In much the same way the writings of Ibsen, Tolstoi, and Bjornstjerne Bjornson have ousted those of a famous Northern writer, Fredrika Biemer. Yet I question if "The Neighbours" has ever been surpassed in quiet humour, simplicity of style, and perception of character. "*Autre temps autres mœurs.*" The novels of the Brontë Sisters are now read by every girl; yet when "Jane Eyre" first astonished the world by its marks of indubitable genius, it was condemned as far from moral in its tendencies, and odious insinuations were whispered about its author. Thackeray and Dickens must ever delight both young and old, and how many other writers we have to be thankful for! Washington Irving, Hawthorne, Bret Harte, Howells, James. Are not their names legion! No novelist of modern times has, in my opinion, been more neglected, and that undeservedly, than Adolphus Trollope; yet his Florentine story, "Marietta," is one of the most delightful books imaginable. How strong is the character-drawing, how lively the humour,

how true to life the descriptions of Italy and its manners and customs! Does not Nanni Palli, the country youth from the Casentino, live in its pages? No dummy he, nor his father Carlo, nor Sebastiano Lunardi, nor the treacherous priest Guido Guidi. Anthony Trollope's novels, if not of a high order, are at least generally entertaining and always pure in tone. His heroines, too, are singularly charming, feminine, and loveable. As for the Bishop and Mrs. Proudie, Archdeacon Grantley, Mr. Quiverful, and Eleanor Bold, do we not look upon them as old friends? Mrs. Oliphant's books are healthy in tone and noble in aim. Mrs. Marshall's, like Elizabeth Sewell's and Lady Georgiana Fullerton's, are harmless and well-meaning, but can scarcely be classed as "literature." Mrs. Hodgson Burnett's are clever and good; John Oliver Hobbes' brilliant, but not adapted to the requirements of a *débutante*. The same may be said of Lucas Malet's novels, and my "Index Expurgatorius," as applied to the reading of young maidens, would contain many more, some of them, unhappily, books of undeniable power but of revolting topics. Time and space warn me that my letter must soon end, yet I have said nothing of the genius of George Meredith and George Eliot, of the gifts of the Kingsleys, of Bulwer Lytton, Besant, Black, Mrs. Humphrey Ward, Mrs. Gaskell, the perfection of style which we see in Pater, and the entertainment to be found in the pages of Conan Doyle, Stanley Weyman, and George Fleming. The Breton peasant says, "*Tel père, tel fils.*" As you train yourself to a love of sound literature, the offspring of your labours will be beauty of mind and richness of intellect. As you debase the gifts God gives you, so will your punishment be mental and moral ugliness and intellectual sterility.





MANY long years ago, King Arthur was reigning in England, having succeeded to the throne on the death of his father, Uther Pendragon. His reign began with trouble, for as he was in London, news was brought to him that King Ryons of Wales was advancing against him, and laying waste to his country. So Arthur went with all his lords and knights to a castle called Camelot, that there they might take counsel together, and prepare for battle.

Shortly after his arrival, word was brought to Arthur that a damsel wished to see him. He ordered her to be brought into his presence, and asked her will.

"I am come from Lady Lila of Avilion," said the damsel; and then she let fall her rich furred mantle, and it was seen that she was girded with a heavy sword. All marvelled at the sight, and Arthur asked her why she wore it, for he thought it unseemly for a damsel to be thus equipped. The maiden replied:

"I must wear this sword until a knight relieves me of it, and he who can do so must be spotless, pure and true. King Ryons of Wales has tried to draw it, but neither he nor any of his knights may prevail."

Then Arthur and all his knights essayed to draw the sword, but in vain; they could not move it from the scabbard.

And the maiden was very sorrowful, for she

deemed that none could be found purer than the Knights of the Round Table.

Now at that time there was at the court of King Arthur a poor knight, Balin of Northumberland, who had slain a cousin of the King in fight, and for that cause had been imprisoned. On account of his good conduct and gentle blood he had been freed, and now, being in the court, would fain have tried his luck with the sword, but hung back because of his poverty and humble array. As the damsel turned to go, Balin called to her, and said:

"Courteous lady, let me also essay to draw the sword."

But the lady marking his mean attire, said: "You will hardly succeed where others have failed; do not trouble me further."

"Outward looks are not all," said Balin; "suffer me to try."

The damsel consented, and Balin, taking hold of the hilt of the sword, drew it out easily. Then the knights marvelled, and many looked sullenly at Balin, for they deemed him an upstart. But the maiden was glad at heart, and said:

"Truly, you are the best and noblest knight I have met. But now, give me the sword again."

"Nay," said Balin, "this sword will I yield to force alone."

"Be warned," said the maiden; "if you

keep it, you shall slay therewith your best-loved friend, and go in deep sorrow."

"God will be my help," said Balin; "but never will I yield the sword."

"So be it," said the maiden, "—but, I have warned you." And with these last words, she left the court.

Then Balin sent for his horse and armour, and made ready to set out in quest of adventures. But Arthur entreated him, saying "Take not in ill part my former unkindness; I did not know you for a noble and worthy knight."

"I bear only love to your Highness," said Balin, "but I must go forth and seek my fate."

"Return here when your quest is over," said Arthur, "and be right welcome."

But the Knights of the Round Table were ill pleased, and said that Balin drew the sword by witchcraft, and not by his own might.

Just as Balin was preparing to depart, the Lady of the Lake appeared at the court of King Arthur. She was richly clad, and rode a noble horse. She greeted the King, and asked him to render her the gift that he had promised when she bestowed upon him his mighty sword Excalibur.

"Ask what you will," said Arthur courteously.

"Then," said the Lady of the Lake, "I must have the head of Balin, or of the damsel who bore the sword, for both have worked me much evil."

"This I cannot grant," said Arthur, "anything else you shall have."

"Nothing else will satisfy me," said the Lady.

But just now Balin, being ready to depart, came forward to take his leave of the King, and saw her who had in former times treacherously slain his mother.

"For asking my head you shall lose yours," he said, and straightway with the magic sword he severed her neck in twain. Then Arthur was very angry, and reproached him bitterly, bidding him quit the court at once, and return

no more. Balin was sorrowful, but, making no reply, he mounted his steed, and rode away with his squire.

After having rode a short distance he dismissed his squire, bidding him go home to Northumberland and tell what had happened.

"I," said Balin, "will go and fight against King Ryons, and if I am fortunate, perchance Arthur will once more look kindly on me." So he rode forth to seek his fortune.

Meanwhile Arthur and his court at Camelot mourned for the Lady of the Lake, and buried her with honour. And an Irish prince named Lancelot craved the King's leave to ride after Balin and avenge her death. Arthur gave his consent, and Lancelot girded on his armour and set forth in pursuit of Balin.

Ere long he came up with his foe.

"Sir Knight, what will you?" said Balin; "will you joust with me?"

"That will I," said Lancelot, "for that purpose have I followed you."

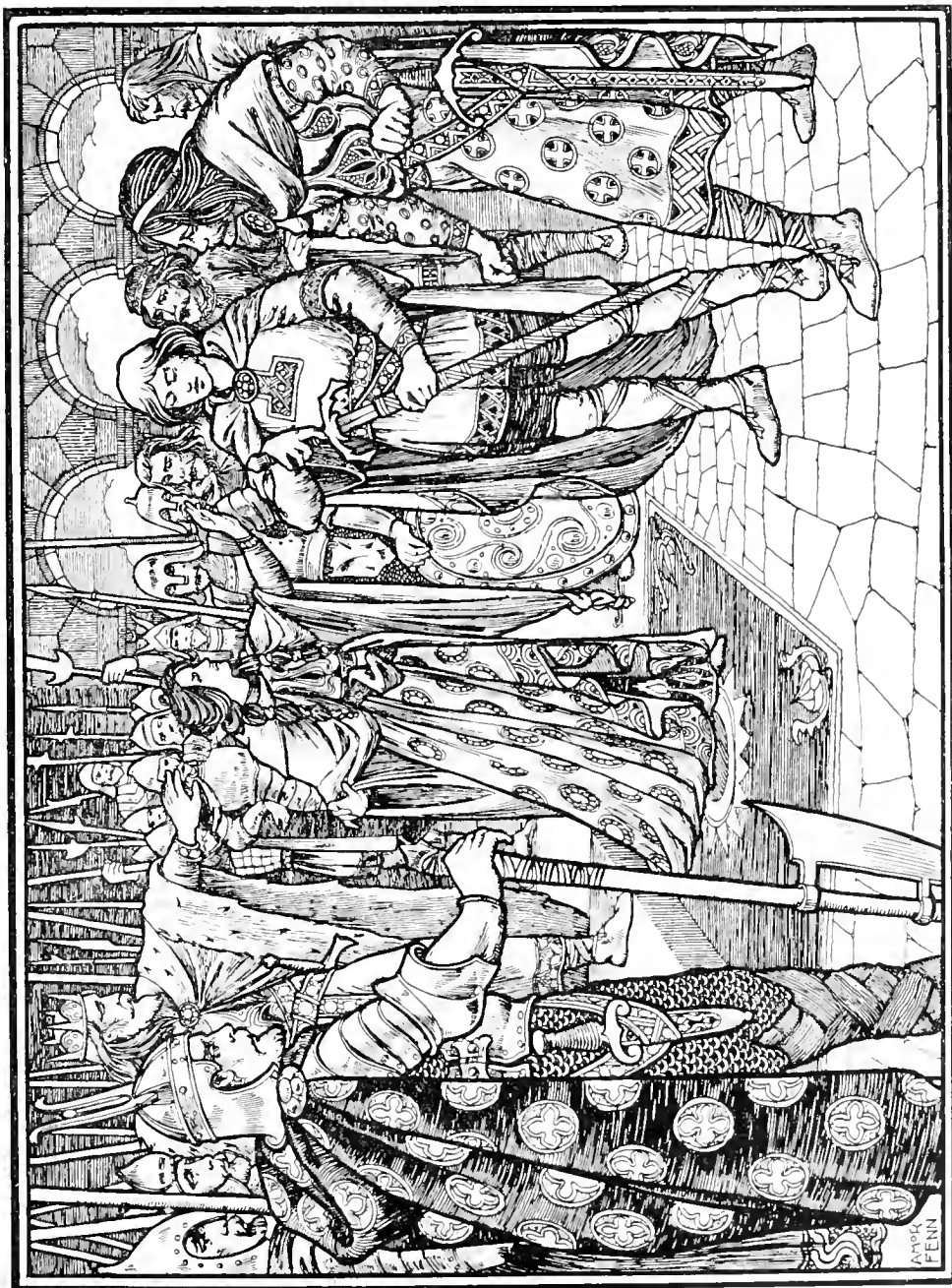
"Whence come you?" said Balin.

"I come from Camelot to avenge upon you the death of the Lady of the Lake," answered Lancelot.

Without more ado, they met in fight. After a sharp struggle, Balin was victorious, and the Irish knight lay dead at his feet. Balin stood awhile somewhat sadly beside his dead foe. Suddenly he heard the rattle of horse's hoofs, and looking round, saw a beautiful damsel riding swiftly towards him. She uttered wild cries of grief when she saw Lancelot lying there dead.

"You have slain two hearts in one, Balin," she said, and seizing the sword which had killed her lover, she fell down in a swoon. After she had revived, Balin tried gently to take the mighty weapon from her, but before he could stop her, she turned the point against herself, and drove it into her heart. Then Balin was in great grief, for he saw that the damsel from Avilion had spoken truly, and that the sword indeed brought sore misfortune to him who possessed it.

As he was mourning for the dead lady, he



BALIN DREW IT OUT EASILY.

became aware of a knight who approached him, riding out of a forest hard by. He recognised the newcomer by his arms for his brother Balan. They embraced with great joy, and wept for pity over the slain. Then Balin told his brother all his adventures, and how he was in sore grief for his misfortunes.

"Well may you be so," said Balan, "but you must accept the fate that God ordains you."

"True," said Balin, "but what I grieve for most is that Arthur is displeased with me; he is the noblest knight on earth, and I will gain his love, even if I lose my life in the attempt. Therefore will I seek his foe King Ryons, who is besieging the Castle Terrabil, - that haply I may prevail against him."

"I will go with you," said Balan, "and we will help one another, as brothers ought to do."

So they set off together in search of King Ryons, and by the way they met the wizard Merlin, who told them many strange things. Then he lent them his aid, for he knew more than any mortal man. And through his aid they met with King Ryons in the way, slew many of his knights, and took him prisoner. Then Merlin vanished by his magic, and coming to King Arthur, told him how his most deadly foe had been vanquished by Balin and Balan, and how he now lay bound and harmless. Then Arthur was in great joy, and he much wished to see the knights, that he might thank them for their good service.

The next day Arthur met with King Ryons' brother Nero and his host. Him he defeated in a great battle, where twelve kings were slain. Then Merlin with marvellous skill wrought twelve images in the likenesses of these kings. These by command of Arthur he placed in a stately tomb. Before them were twelve tapers which burned day and night, nor did the flame of them fade until Merlin's death. Not long after this Arthur, ailing somewhat, was lying in a pavilion in a meadow. Being unable to sleep, he looked out of the door of the pavilion, and there he saw a knight come riding by, mourning

bitterly. Arthur asked the cause of his sorrow, but could get no answer. Shortly afterwards Balin rode past, and seeing King Arthur, turned to salute him. Arthur greeted him warmly, but urged him at once to follow the sorrowful knight, and to find out the cause of his grief. So Balin journeyed forward, and coming upon the knight and his lady in a forest, bade him turn back, and seek Arthur's presence. The knight unwillingly left the lady, and complied. Just as they reached Arthur's pavilion, an invisible foe started forward and dealt Balin's companion a mortal wound. "Take my horse," said the dying man to Balin, "and seek my lady; I must die, but she will lead you forward on the Quest which I undertook, and you shall avenge my death."

Then Balin pledged his faith to undertake this trust, and Arthur with sorrow gave the dead knight honourable burial.

The damsel and Balin rode forward, and by the way they met a knight named Perin, who accompanied them. But the mysterious invisible foe again sprang forward, and smote Perin to the heart so that he died. Then Balin was deeply angry and sorrowful, swearing that he would meet this traitor, and avenge on him the murders that he had committed. So with the lady he rode on, encountering by the way many adventures, until he came to a stately castle. Here the owner, a rich and lordly man, bade them welcome, and feasted them royally. And as they sat at supper, Balin heard a knight complain grievously of the injuries dealt him at a jousting by a treacherous foe who went invisible.

"He is my foe too," said Balin, "and I had rather meet him than any other in this realm, so much long I to avenge upon him the wicked deeds that he has done."

"That is easy," said his host; "King Pellam, who rules this country, will shortly hold a great feast. Garlon (for so is your foe called) will be there, and you may meet and strive with him."

So the next day Balin and the lady journeyed forward, and at King Pellam's



SHE TURNED THE POINT TOWARDS HERSELF.

least they met Garlon, who for the time being was not invisible. That rude traitor dealt Balin an insolent blow on the face, and reviled him with taunts; but the knight of Northumberland, taking from the lady the weapon wherewith Garlon had slain her lord, plunged it into his body, and thus avenged many murders. Then the knights who were present rose from the table, and turned enraged on Balin. King Pellam started forward fiercely, saying:

"You have slain my brother and must die."

So he smote a mighty blow; but Balin received it on the sword which had slain Garlon, which turned aside the stroke, but was shivered by its force.

Then he ran to seek a fresh weapon, and in a chamber of the castle, lying upon a table with silver feet and a golden top, he found a marvellous spear, strangely wrought. With this he smote Pellam a mighty blow. The king fell down in a swoon, and immediately the castle walls sank to earth, for enchantment prevailed there, and Balin had broken the spell by his Dolorous Stroke.

Then Merlin the Wizard came and rescued Balin from the ruins. But King Pellam lay in sickness and sorrow for many years, until

the noble Galahad, seeking the Holy Grail, met and healed him. Balin thanked Merlin for his timely aid, and they parted, never to meet again in this world.

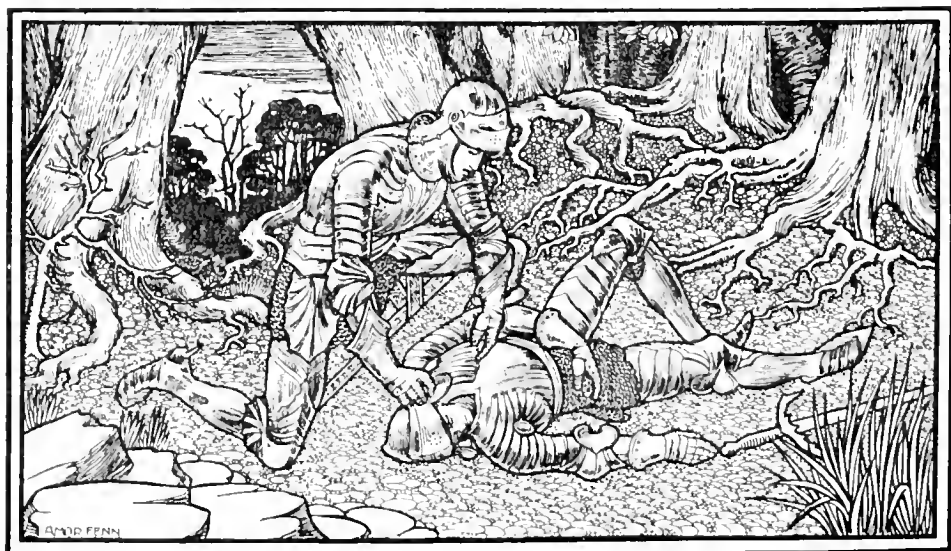
Our knight soon rode forth again, and ere long he came to a wayside cross on which were letters of gold, forbidding approach to the neighbouring castle. But Balin still advanced. Soon he met an old man, who gave him a second warning; this also he heeded not. Then he heard a horn blow, as it were for the death of a hunted deer; this omen he felt portended evil to him, but still he rode on. A gay company now met him, and led him into the castle, where there was dancing and merriment. Then said the lady of the castle:

"Sir Knight with the two swords—near here there is a knight who guards an island, and with him all comers must do battle."

"My horse is weary, but my heart is stout and strong," said Balin, "as well may I meet death here as elsewhere."

"Your shield is small," said a knight who was near, "I will lend you a larger."

Balin thanked him, and took the shield; this was a foolish act, for by his shield alone could he be known. He had no fear, and



HIS BROTHER . . . KNEW HIM.

went forward to seek the assailant who awaited him.

Then out of a castle he saw a knight come riding, clad all in crimson. Great and sore misfortune was at hand, for this was Balan, the brother of Balin. The two met in battle, and stroke fell upon stroke so fiercely that the field was soon red with blood. Seven great wounds dealt each to each, and at last Balan, the younger, drew aside a little, and laid him down. Then Balin said:

"What knight are you? For never before met I my match."

"I am Balan, brother to Balin," said the other.

Then Balin gave a great cry, and fell back in a swoon. And his brother, creeping towards him, unlaced his helm, looked upon his face, and knew him. Balin opened his eyes, and they grieved bitterly together, saying:

"One mother bore us, and one grave shall hold us both."

Then the lady of the castle came forward, weeping, and promised them honourable burial. And they said to her:

"Send for a priest, that we may receive the Holy Sacrament before we die."

So the priest performed the holy office, and shortly afterwards the brothers died.

Then Merlin came, and added Balin's name to Balan's in the inscription on their tomb. And he took the magic sword, and laid it aside, prophesying that no knight should handle it again save the best knight in the world. That should be Lancelot, and with the sword he should slay his best-loved friend Gawain. And this prophecy Merlin engraved upon the pommel of the sword. Then he went home to Camelot, and told all to Arthur, who grieved greatly. And Balin and Balan were held in loving and undying memory.

MAUD VENABLES VERNON.

MADAME DE GRANDPRE'S DINNER PARTY.

"TIENS!" said Madame de Grandpre, "we must give a dinner party."

Gabrielle glanced up, startled, from the flowers which she was arranging, and a shade of anxiety flitted across her charming face.

"But mamma—" she began gently.

"It is necessary, my daughter," interrupted Madame pompously, "absolutely necessary that we should entertain the Duchesse and Monsieur de la Ferte becomingly, since they visit us with such an important end in view. The marriage of our eldest daughter—and such a marriage, beyond our fondest dreams! Ah, who would have looked for such luck? I should say the beneficence of heaven!" she corrected herself piously. "When Madame d'Yvetot told me of the suggestion I could hardly conceal my joy, and meet it with befitting dignity!" And, indeed, the evident pride swelling the lady's breast made her somewhat resemble a pouter pigeon, and must have been difficult to disguise.

Poor pretty Gabrielle sighed again. Even the fact that it was her own marriage which was under discussion failed to interest her on this occasion as it would ordinarily have done. A deep and secret dismay was filling her heart. She had no secret preference to urge against the intended match, and she appreciated how satisfactory such an alliance would be, for the family was large and their means small: her *dot* and that of her younger sisters would be insignificant, and as a *mésalliance* was not to be thought of for the noble, if poverty-stricken, house of Grandpre, the Duchesse's offer was one in a thousand. No, it was not her own sentiments which stood in the way, for Gabrielle accepted her fate with the meekness of most French girls in such matters. It never occurred to her that in the choosing of a husband she herself could have any voice. But an inward distrust of her mother's methods to the desired end made her unusually self-assertive.



"Perhaps Madame d'Yvetot was wrong?" she suggested persistently.

"Not she. She is a mutual friend, and could not be mistaken on such an important point. And, besides, has not the Duchesse written to say that she will visit us? There is her letter to prove it! For what other purpose should she come to Grandpre than in search of a wife for Gontron de la Ferte? Also, I know," Madame dropped her voice and nodded knowingly, "she is anxious that he should marry—he is none too steady. I myself have seen his name in the papers—his horses, his duels—" she caught herself up sharply, remembering that Gabrielle was to be fired with admiration for the Marquis rather than informed of his drawbacks.

"Monsieur de la Ferte is a great 'sportsman,' I know," said Gabrielle modestly, speaking the alien word with awe. She knew that the Marquis had a reputation, his clothes and his grooms were more English than those across the Channel, and he was revered and imitated by the gilded youth of Paris. "He has travelled; they say he has been round the world. What should bring him to such a quiet place as Grandpre for a wife? He will surely find no attractions in a girl who has never been out of Languedoc!"

"Tut! tut! child, it is not his choice so much as that of the Duchesse. He will have everything that is hers, and be rich! rich!" Madame rubbed her hands gleefully. "But he will marry to please her, and therefore it is to her that we must look for the consummation of this"—she hesitated for a word—"this Providential alliance!" she said.

Gabrielle shook her head, silent but unconvinced. Monsieur de la Ferte looked a very terrible person to her imagination seen through the medium of other people's eyes.

"But the dinner, mamma!" she said, knitting her fine brows. "Would it not be wiser to receive the Duchesse simply, and let her see us as we are? Otherwise she may get a wrong impression."

"Nonsense, Gabrielle! that would be just

the ruin of our plans. Because the Chateau is a little—er, not in such a repair as it might be, shall we allow the Duchesse to think that we are shabby inside as well as out, and expose our poverty to her?"

"But you know, mamma, that we cannot afford to entertain in the style to which the Duchesse and Monsieur de la Ferte are doubtless accustomed."

Madame de Grandpre rose up with the stiffness of inflexible will in every joint. "Cannot afford!" she repeated. "We must afford! For once we will give a dinner such as our rank befits. What occasion so appropriate as the present? Run away, Gabrielle, and leave me to settle this affair. Let me see—as to the *mènu*"—

As Gabrielle carried away her flowers she could still hear her mother murmuring of "Bouchees a la Reine, Vuenelles de Poulet," and shook her head more emphatically than before. Such dishes did not come to the daily dinner table of the Grandpre's, and old Caroline had a rooted objection to extending her knowledge in the culinary line. What if the dinner should be a disaster! How terrible! Gabrielle's troubled eyes wandered away over the old-fashioned garden, ablaze with flowers, but she saw neither roses nor lilies, nor the orchard trees beyond groaning under a weight of fruit. All was blotted out for her by the phantom of a too-ambitious dinner, whose viands lay as heavy upon her as if she had already swallowed them. And, indeed, during the days which preceded the great visit the whole family had reason to share Gabrielle's distaste for the coming feast. The house became a place of confusion, nothing was talked of but the intended dinner, and Madame de Grandpre's views upon all the details of the entertainment became so enlarged and augmented with repetition that Gabrielle's spirits sank lower and lower with a presage of coming misfortune.

The great day dawned at last. By four o'clock in the morning Madame de Grandpre was astir, and ruthlessly awakened her house-

hold. Languedoc is an old-fashioned place, where marital and filial duty still obtains, so poor Monsieur de Grandpre and the children rose with many a sigh, but without protesting. Even at that early hour Madame de Grandpre, oppressed with the cares of the occasion, began by prophesying that "nothing would be ready for dinner." She glided from room to room, worn to a faded likeness of her faded self by the night's anxiety. She was just as scrupulously dressed as ever, but she had the look of wearied neatness peculiar to a person who has been up all night. There were tears in her voice as she paused by the bedside of her eldest son and spoke to him.

"Raymond!" she implored, "Rise—rise at once! there are the provisions to fetch from X—. They have not arrived—you must harness the dogcart and go for them yourself." Her voice had a note almost of despair, for Raymond had turned his face to the wall, and feigned not to have heard. He was a handsome boy, and good-tempered as a rule, but to be roused at four in the morning to fetch provisions for a dinner at six, made him deeply resentful.

Gabrielle, hereft of the morning sleep she loved, appeared in her turn with heavy eyes and a white tired face. She had been kept up until after midnight preparing *compôtes* and crystallised fruits, and all night long these dainties had haunted her uneasy dreams. As soon as she was dressed she stole slowly downstairs to look at her handiwork. "They are not a brilliant success, certainly," she said to herself ruefully. "But they will help to decorate the table, and very likely no one will take them—I hope neither the Duchesse nor Monsieur de la Ferte will chance to do so! After all there will be no need to hand round any sweets but those which come from X—."

Jeanne, the second daughter, had been working hard for days at the dresses for the occasion. She possessed an unfortunate reputation in the household of being "so clever with her needle," and had already set

to work thus early in the day to finish Gabrielle's dress, her own, and those of her younger sisters, Fernande, Louise, and Alice. Gabrielle, leaving her own confectionery, came and looked at her sister's production. It did not appear much more promising than her own, and there was an equally lugubrious droop about the corners of Jeanne's mouth.

"There is so much to do," she said irritably. "Five dresses in eight days! It really is too tiring—and the little ones ought to help with them."

"Where are the children?" asked Gabrielle anxiously.

"Oh, Fernande is trying to crimp her hair, or some such nonsense," replied Jeanne. "You know it never will curl or wave, it is too fine and soft. Louise is half off her head at the idea of wearing her first long frock, and keeps interrupting me to ask if it will 'drag enough' instead of helping."

"Alice was to peal plums for the syrup," said Gabrielle thoughtfully, looking round for her youngest sister. Alice was only twelve years old, but that did not prevent her being pressed into the service.

"I wish she had stuck to her plum-peeling," Jeanne said, laughing in spite of her annoyance. "She leaves it every five minutes to come and see how the dresses are getting on, and she has messed your dress with touching it with fruit-stained fingers. I hope it will not show in the folds, but——"

"Never mind," interrupted Gabrielle gently. "It really does not matter, Jeanne. If they would only not concern themselves so much in my interest, the dear people," she added tremulously, for through the window she could see Monsieur de Grandpre, embellished by a battered Panama hat, on his way to the kitchen garden to gather the fruit. Gabrielle could see him pause in evident trouble and bewilderment, but could not divine the cause at that distance. The fact was, the fruit had ripened only on one side. What was to be done? Had he been

able to foresee the possibility the week before, he would have turned the fruit round so that it would have caught the sun on the other side. He stood before the fruit trees helpless, and wondering what his wife would say to such a catastrophe.

"I wonder why Papa does not begin to pick?" said Gabrielle.

"Jeanne Gabrielle—come here!" Madame de Grandpre interrupted at this minute.

Jeanette shut her scissors with a little snap, and with faint exasperation the two sisters obeyed the imperious summons.

Madame de Grandpre was gazing earnestly at a pile of table-linen, which she had unearthed from the cupboard, where it had lain for six years—ever since, indeed, it had been laid out at the christening of her youngest born, Maxime.

"Do you think that it will look so bad a colour by candle-light?" she inquired of her daughters.

As a matter of fact the tablecloth looked like a huge map, for it had acquired a greyish tint in the seclusion of the cupboard, with lines of yellow dust in the folds. But the eyes of the two girls met, and the same thought was in both their minds—"If we say that it cannot be used as it is, we shall have to assist in washing and ironing it."

"Oh, no, Mamma," said Jeanne hypocritically. "It will not show at all by candle-light."

"Well, we will let it pass then," said Madame de Grandpre. There was still a note of uncertainty in her voice, but the girls hastened to take it as settled, and Jeanne returned to her sewing, while Gabrielle went off to look after the children.

In the schoolroom the noise was appalling. For once the three boys, Jack, François, and Maxime, were of one mind, and coalesced to defy the authority of the patient Abbe, whose task as preceptor was by no means an easy one that day. What was the use of a big dinner, or any other

fête, if you were to work all the same? they argued. The Abbe looked helplessly at Gabrielle, whose distress deepened with each fresh proof of the disturbance she was the indirect means of causing in that quiet household. Oh, why would they humiliate and pain her so? she wondered, hearing the grumbling of the old servants who were unaccustomed to being driven about in that fashion, and feeling in her silent irony, what a useless expense and trouble it all was.

"I wish I could go away and hide in some quiet place until it is all over," she thought, flushing with vexation. "And when they see it all—our efforts to appear richer than we are—our palpable ostentation to disguise our poverty—what will they think?"

But she dared not protest in words, for Madame de Grandpre, harassed and overtired, was positively harsh to her eldest daughter, and when the docile Baron (who had been indefatigable since the morning, and thought he had fairly earned a little repose) fell into a capacious arm-chair, and tore the wrapper from his beloved newspaper, she snatched it from his hand, exclaiming, "You are positively good for nothing but to idle your time away over that wretched paper!"

Monsieur de Grandpre, overwhelmed, bent his head before the whirlwind. Never before in all their twenty-four years of married life had his irreproachable spouse so forgotten herself!

At twelve o'clock old Baptist rang the bell for the second *déjeuner*, and the whole family trooped into the dining-room one after the other. There they found Madame de Grandpre gazing on her nearly completed work, the elaborately-decorated table.

"What is this?" cried Raymond. "Are we to breakfast here?"

"Of course not," answered his mother. "Thou seest the table is laid for the evening."

"Oh, then we are to have no breakfast at all?"

"*Déjeuner* is laid in the servants' hall, my son."

The family looked doubtful, for the servants' hall would only hold eight people; but they found that Madame de Grandpre had just managed, with much ingenuity, to fit in twelve places. It was impossible to move when once seated, so, in preference, Raymond seized his plate and ate his breakfast on the window-ledge, with his legs dangling into the garden, while the younger children took advantage of the situation to bestow kicks and pinches on the long-suffering Abbe, who doubled up his feet under his chair at last in self-defence. All the servants being busy in polishing the floors or rubbing up the buttons of their antiquated liveries, when there was any waiting to be done the children did it.

Suddenly Raymond called out that the provision cart, driven by the gardener, was coming up the drive, and Madame de Grandpre rushed out of the room, breathless with anxiety.

She returned, smiling, after a few minutes.

"The turbot is not *quite* fresh," she said, "but it is a splendid turbot, and will eat very well. Caroline must put plenty of taragon vinegar in the sauce."

She continued skimming the mould off some jam while she parcelled out fresh tasks to her household.

"You must see to the flowers for the vases and jardinières, Gabrielle," she said. "You can go and gather them at once."

"Oh, Mamma!" expostulated Gabrielle, "it is too early. It is only twelve o'clock, and the sun will be so hot."

"Thou canst take a parasol."

"But, Mamma, I can't gather flowers and take a parasol too."

"Really, you children are too aggravating! It is for you, Mademoiselle, that we are doing all this. It seems to me that you might take your share of the work."

Gabrielle turned away with tears in her soft brown eyes, found the garden scissors and a large basket, and disappeared towards the garden.

"And will you, my dear, see if the drive has been properly swept and looks decent?"

continued the energetic Chatelaine, turning to her husband.

"Certainly, certainly," replied the Baron, with suspicious alacrity. He felt cautiously in his pocket to see that his spectacles were safely there, pounced upon his beloved Legitimist paper, which he crammed in on top of them, and disappeared from his wife's sight. He was pining for his paper. Never a morning had passed for twenty-five years without his having read and digested its contents before the clock struck twelve; but for all that he forced himself to wait a little longer, and proceeded conscientiously to inspect the drive first. He was on his way back to report favourably on the matter, and settle down to his paper, when he saw his wife coming towards him with a troubled expression on her face.

"Will you drive to X— this minute, my dear friend!" she implored. "The butcher has made a mistake; he has sent a *rosbif* of only four pounds."

"But, my dear," replied the Baron, "there is not time to drive to X— and back again. We must try the village."

"The village!" cried Madame de Grandpre, impatiently. "They only kill there on Saturdays, and this is Thursday. It is too vexatious!"

"They will kill for me," returned Monsieur de Grandpre, rather sententiously. There was to be no paper for him after all.

That momentous day wore slowly on. The Duchesse was not expected until six, but there was still so much to do that the whole family felt that they would hardly be ready for her even by that time. The boys were all dressed directly after their tea, so, of course, before five o'clock Maxime had contrived to make several holes in his stockings, and had got a large ink-spot on his collar, while Jack had drenched the Abbé's best cassock with the garden hose, and François had stolen two apricots from the pyramid which his mother had patiently erected, with the fruit turned the ripe side out, and scattered her handiwork to the four corners of the table.

"I must positively call on your good nature to gather me a few vine leaves to cover the deficiencies and finish the dessert," said Madame de Grandpre, in distracted tones, to her long-suffering husband.

"But, my dear, surely it is time for me to dress."

"Oh, well; of course, if you have no consideration for my feelings, and think only of yourself."

The Baron fled before the storm of reproaches to gather the required greenery, and reflected that it was his thirtieth journey within his own domain that day. Having selected the vine leaves, he turned towards the house to divest himself of his comfortable old velveteen coat, his embroidered slippers, and his straw wide-awake, when at that moment he heard the rumble of a carriage coming nearer and nearer. Ye gods! it was the Duchesse! In a vain hope that she might take him for the gardener he turned his head away, so that she might not see his face, and plunged into the shrubbery.

But the Duchesse and her grandson saw and recognised their host in spite of his efforts to conceal himself.

"What a type of an unregenerate old poacher!" laughed Gontron, as they drove towards the house. "A pea-jacket, surmounted by a pointed Panama. What an ideal father-in-law! When I am married I shall respectfully ask his permission to make a sketch of him as he first appeared to me! But really, if his daughter is like him, I cannot marry her," he added, as he handed his grandmother out of the carriage at the foot of the broad flight of steps. She was a little old lady of seventy, with snow-white hair, very bright eyes, and a complexion of which she was justly proud. She wore a plain soft grey dress, folds of softest lawn and lace covered her throat and framed her face; and although she stooped a little, and leaned upon a stick, she had the unmistakable "great air."

They had heard the sound of many voices

as they drove up to the door, but now all was silent as the grave.

"Are we in the palace of the Sleeping Beauty?" Gontron was saying to his grandmother, when old Baptist came to the rescue, having donned his livery with such speed that there was a piece of bare ankle in sight between trouser and stocking.

"Monsieur le Baron and Madame la Baronne would be down immediately," he explained. "If they were not there to receive Madame la Duchesse and Monsieur le Marquis, it was because they were still washing themselves when the carriage drove up."

When the old servant had retired, the amused guests exchanged a rapid glance.

"We appear to be before our time," Gontron was beginning, when the door opened softly again. What next? Shy, and on tiptoe, looking over her shoulder every now and then as if to make sure she was not followed, came Gabrielle, as lovely a little maiden as might be, despite the dark lines under her eyes, and poor Jeanne's bad dressmaking. The coils of fair hair, even to the little golden rings on the nape of the neck, were hidden by a heavy wreath which had been fastened on by Madame de Grandpre's own hands.

"Madame la Duchesse," she began in a tremulous voice, with a gasp in her breath like a child who has much to say, and is in a hurry to say it, "Papa and Mamma will be here in a moment. But while you are waiting for them, will you allow me to speak to you as though I had known you a long time?"

"Say what you like, dear child."

"You have thought of me as your—as a wife for your grandson, have you not?"

The Duchesse, for once in her life taken aback by this frankness, looked at Gontron. But even his presence of mind had forsaken him. Gabrielle glanced at him for a second. He had a pleasant face, and was manly-looking, instead of the fop she had half expected; and his eyes—they were hand-

some eyes, too—were regarding her with a decidedly friendly interest. She gathered a little courage as she realised, with a sense of relief, that he was not so splendid an apparition as she had pictured to herself,—nothing to be afraid of, anyhow. The bright colour flew to her cheeks as she drew breath to say the rest of the lesson she had taught herself.

“I know that I am doing a dreadful thing; but I must do it, and I hope you will excuse me. I am not a fit wife for Monsieur de la Ferte; not at all.” Two minutes ago Monsieur de la Ferte would have been inclined to agree with her; now he made a quick gesture as if it were an instinctive protest. The colour in Gabrielle’s face deepened, and her shy brown eyes dropped hastily as she continued—

“You must have been misled as to my parents’ condition, and they, dazzled by the idea of my making so great a match, have fondly imagined that the obstacles can be removed which—”

“But, my child, what do you mean by obstacles?” interrupted the Duchesse.

“Madame, we are many in family, and not very rich. Papa and Mamma wish to give you a better reception here than is in their power; and you cannot fail to see how ridiculous we are making ourselves.”

“Not at all, not at all; we—” began the Duchesse; but Gabrielle, seeing a reassuring smile on the old lady’s pleasant though decided face, ventured to interrupt her. The time was so short!

“*Sì, sì*, believe me, it is so. The house has been turned topsy-turvy for the last week—ever since you wrote to announce your visit. It has all been so funny! Papa has been gathering apricots and raking the walks, and has not even had time to read his newspaper. Raymond has done nothing but grumble because he hates a fuss; and the children have taken advantage of the disturbance to be so naughty! Poor Mother! I hope you will not laugh at all at her little preparations.”

The Duchesse, more and more amused, made up her mind that this pretty girl was decidedly original. Gontron’s first interest was rapidly changing to sympathy for the effort she was making, and admiration for her charming animated face, as she went on hurriedly—

“You will have a miserable dinner! But I assure you, Madame, that it is not always so. We have been so happy and comfortable until now. We have all that we want without any display, but now—only for my sake—” She faltered. “Mamma is late for dinner; so is Papa. As for me, I have been obliged to come to you in my dressing-jacket. I have not even had time to get rid of the stains from the bulrushes that I gathered for the vases in the hall.” Here she held out two little hands with a pretty natural gesture; they were, perhaps, rather sunburnt, but perfect in form, and, as the Duchesse afterwards remarked, “admirable in expression.”

“You see,” continued Gabrielle, “everything in the house is like my hands—unpresentable. You are looking at my wreath, Madame?” for the Duchesse’s eyes had wandered to the top of the child’s head. “What a wreath, is it not; like Madame de Stael’s turban! But Mamma made me put it on that I might look my best.”

She was looking very demure, but her eyes danced with mischief, and Gontron, meeting her merry glance, laughed heartily. The Duchesse’s mouth took the little curve it always did when she had come to one of her rapid decisions, and she looked at the girl with increased kindness.

“Now that we understand each other,” continued Gabrielle, “and that marriage is out of the question” (the Duchesse glanced, as if by chance, at her grandson—he had really looked as if he were about to speak) “I feel quite at home with you, and even the weight of my wreath is bearable. You will not be hard upon us, Madame, now that you know the truth? You will not laugh at us too much? Papa and mamma are so good,

and Raymond is such a dear boy, and the children are dear children! Really, we are not bad people, but that won't prevent the dinner being very bad."

Then placing her finger on her lips, she ran out of the room. She had hardly disappeared when Monsieur and Madame de Grandpre came in, making profuse apologies. The former looked stiff and embarrassed, and, in reality, was dead tired, and the latter was feeling upset from the many things she had tasted during the day, and was aching in every bone. Then Raymond came in, looking easy and handsome in his evening dress, and yet not quite himself, owing to his uncongenial surroundings. Jeanne, Fernande, Louise, and Alice were followed by the Abbe, who marshalled in his three pupils with red faces and swollen eyelids, snuffing like children who had just stopped crying. Gabrielle was the last to make her appearance.

It was old Baptist's duty to announce dinner. For twenty-five years he had thrown open the folding-doors every evening at the same hour, with the same words, "Madame la Baronne is served." But for the past week, and especially on this day, he had heard so much about the Duchesse that the portentous title rang in his ears and muddled him, and just as he opened one side of the folding-doors, he called out in stentorian tones, "Madame la Duchesse is served!"

Then conscious of the enormity of his mistake, he rushed away as fast as possible, leaving the other half of the folding-doors unopened.

The Marquis looked at his grandmother in surprise that they should be treated like Royalty, and to cover the confusion Monsieur de Grandpre offered his arm to the Duchesse, and led her into the dining-room so hastily that he grazed her shoulder in squeezing through the half-opened door.

It was seven o'clock, and the famished Grandpres, who had eaten nothing since morning, devoured their soup in silence, thanks to the appetite they had gained. It was a thick grey liquid, with balls which

looked like india-rubber floating about in it, and described as *Quenelles de poulet* in the menu. Madame de Grandpre had read in "Baron Brise" that this was a much esteemed clear soup, but Caroline, the cook, knew better than to waste a fowl in so unnatural a manner, so she composed the *quelles* more economically, chiefly of bread and sour milk. Gabrielle, sitting next to Gontron, saw him making heart-rending efforts to swallow it, whilst its faint smell of burning fat was evidently choking him.

"You need not force yourself to eat it for my sake," she said simply, turning towards him.

He laughed irrepressibly. The ice was broken, and there was a sense of comfort in the tacit understanding between them. Marriage was out of the question, thought Gabrielle, but there was no reason why they should not be merry if they might not eat, and Gontron found a solace for the hopelessness of the entertainment in the society of his pretty neighbour.

"What follows," said Gabrielle, "will be worse still."

"Oh!" said Gontron, incredulously.

But it was only too true—the *bouchées à la Reine* were worse still. They were atrocious. Raymond, seeing from his end of the table that Gabrielle and Monsieur de la Ferte were joking about the dinner, laughed too, and made signs to them. Monsieur and Madame de Grandpre were too absorbed in watching the servants to notice anything that was going on, and the poor Duchesse suffered like a martyr from boredom and hunger. In vain she looked about for olives or sardines, or something to still its pangs; the expression of her face grew troubled, and she almost frowned now and then. But her eyes softened when they happened to fall on Gontron and Gabrielle, who seemed to be on excellent terms with each other.

Gabrielle had lost all her shyness, and was describing their usual life at Grandpres.

"You see," she was saying, "we each have our share of the work in the household,

Jeanne makes the dresses, Fernande the preserves, Raymond does the errands and the commissions at X—, the boys keep the drive in order, and Louise and Alice gather the fruit; except to-day! To-day was an extraordinary day, and so papa did it."

"And you, Mademoiselle?"

"Oh, I have the flowers to attend to."

"That is certainly appropriate," said Gontron quietly.

The entrance of the turbot made a painful sensation. Baptist placed it on the table, according to ancient custom, before serving it. Raymond blew his nose ostentatiously; the Abbe cast a troubled look at his pupils; Gabrielle made a comically deprecating face, as she said to the marquis, "I am afraid you must be very hungry!"

In truth he was famished, and felt that it aggravated his feelings to see a succession of pretentious dishes, each one more execrable than the other, follow in due and dismal order. At last the *rosbif* made its appearance. Welcome! It looked splendid. Gontron rejoiced, and comforted himself; after all, it was rather nice to be hungry. He helped himself to a good thick slice, and attacked it voraciously; but his dismay was great when he found that he could not get his teeth through it. They were good teeth, too, and had hitherto served him admirably. And what a singular taste the meat had! Raymond's and Gabrielle's eyes met, and they laughed heartily. Raymond made a pantomimic gesture, with his fingers on the cloth, of two horses running round a field, and Gabrielle translated, for Gontron's benefit, "that two short hours ago that 'beef' had

chased its fellows round the green meadows."

But by this time the Duchesse and her temper were suffering from cramp, and as soon as coffee was served she summoned her grandson, ordered her horses to be harnessed, and drove home in quest of food. "You must eat to live," was the not very original remark she vouchsafed on her way thither.

The consternation of the Grandpres can be better imagined than described. She had gone without passing a night under their roof. All was lost!

Monsieur and Madame de Grandpre looked sadly into each other's faces. Their trouble had been in vain; it was dreadful! The children were more or less puzzled. The famous dinner was a thing of the past. Did all great feasts last so short a time? But Gabrielle went to bed happy. Her torment was at an end, and she fell asleep only to dream of spoiled turbot, long bulrushes, and just a very little of the Marquis.

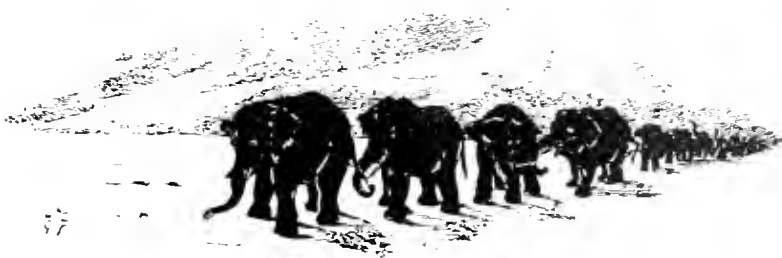
The next morning brought a surprise to the whole family in the shape of an official letter from the Duchesse, asking formally for the hand of Mademoiselle Gabrielle de Grandpre for her grandson, Monsieur Gontron Raoul Louis Adalbert, Marquis de la Ferte.

Tableau! The first to recover the use of speech after the general stupefaction was poor, bewildered Madame de Grandpre.

"You see," she said, "my dinner was not so bad after all."

But Gabrielle's face was a mixture of contrition and dimpling merriment.

DOLF WYLLARDE.





SEA SAPPHICS.

Sinking, slowly sinking, a weary Titan,
Glowe the great sun, poised on a darkling sea-rim,
Sweeping sea-rim, broken to burning glory,
Touching the sun-edge ;

Half dis-orbed, an arch on the light-way's limit,
Lo ! it dips ; above it the sundered levels
Meet, and crimson, shot from the sunken splendour,
Flushes the zenith.

Softly leaves the heart of the happy ocean,
Calm as maiden clasped in the arms of first-love,
Glad as childhood playing in cowslip meadows,
Sheltered and sunny.

Roses, roses bloom upon eastern cloud-piles,
Roses, roses redden the rhythmic azure,
Roses melt in snowiest surf, a rose-band
Rings the horizon.

Glide, O lofty ship, with the burnished bulwarks,
Purple-sailed, away to the golden offing,
Gliding, fade, and slip from the farthest sea-verge
Into the unknown !

Bearest thou sweet hope or the exile's heart-break,
Black despair, remorse, or a glad returning,
Costly freight, or thunder of battle, bearest
Over the sea-rim ?

Mute, ah ! mute, mysterious, dim, thou glidest,
Winged with speed, a lessening point ; so visions,
Glory-freighted, slip from the glowing fancy
Into oblivion.

Now the breakers roll with a mellowed thunder,
Mystic, multitudinous-voiced, majestic,
Farther-drawn, from uttermost waste of waters,
Rising and roaring.

Art thou glad, O sea, for the veiling lustre,
Rent, that bares thy deeps to the endless heavens,
Million-starred ? The worlds in thy bosom,
trembling,

Thrill thee to rapture,

Thrill thee, sate thee, still thy unmeasured yearning,
Rolling, foaming, mellow-booming ocean ;
O thou finite, infinite longing moves thee,
Infinite striving.

Leap, your manes up-tossing, ye proud sea-courers,
Plunge to land and leap to the stars, and thunder
Loud on reef and rock, where the grinding surges
Circle in surf-dust !

Leap and toss your manes, for the shining legions
Wheel in stately march from the bounds of being,
Sweep in endless march, till the heart of ocean
Harbours the heavens ;

Finite clasps the infinite ; suns and systems,
Set to rhythmic measure, in music spinning,
Break away like pearls from a chaplet sundered,
Scattered in sea-waves.

Roar, O billows, rolling the parted Pleiads,
Rolling fixed Orion from bands to license,
Wave to wavelet tossing the glowing star-globes,
Heavenly fruitage !

Now a musing moon from the wave is mounting,
Orbed in fire ; with shimmer of glancing gold-flake
Laughs the sea ; the stars, at her gaze ashamed,
Quiver and minish.

Lo ! thy lady stoops to thy soft imploring,
Charmed, O sea, and mute with unmeasured rapture,
Wave and beam in passionate pulse are blended,
Hope is fruition.

Queen of darkness ! leashed as a bound thou holdest,
Strong in hand, the leap of the mighty tide-wave ;
Yet wilt veil thy crest to Aurora, strewing
Bloom on the sea-plains :

Veil thy crest and vanish, O queen of visions,
Loose thy silvern spell from the charmed water,
Bring the fisher home, and the weary watcher,
Homeward the bat flies,

Homeward fays and elves of the night are flitting,
Weird sea maidens' melodies die, and softly
Croons the rubied sea in the pause, ere day-break
Waken the sun-steeds.

MAXWELL GRAY.

PRINCELY POETESSES.

IF, as Shelley would have us believe—

“ Most wretched men
Are cradled into poetry by wrong:
They learn in suffering what they teach
in song ”—

then most assuredly has captivity wrung from the hearts of some of the Royal daughters of the world the saddest of songs. To pass in review the poetry of the Princesses we know and love the best, is to take ourselves back into the olden days, when there were dungeons and stern gaolers and fair ladies of great estate as captives, and frequently the axe and the block as the final scene in the terrible drama. Beautiful Anne Boleyn in the Tower, Mary Queen of Scots at Holyrood, Lady Jane Grey in the Tower, and Queen Elizabeth at Woodstock will be remembered for their sufferings in these lonely spots long after the souvenirs of their brighter moments are forgotten, and the most touching relics of their incarceration are to be found in the verses in which they unburdened their sorrowful hearts.

Take, for instance, the dirge which Anne Boleyn wrote on herself after her condemnation, which begins—

“ Oh, Death! rock me asleep,
Bring on my quiet rest,
Let pass my very guiltless ghost
Out of my careful breast.”

Or the dire foreboding in the lines traced by Lady Jane Grey on the walls of her apartment in the Tower—

“ To mortals' common fate thy mind resign,
My lot to-day to-morrow may be thine.”

One would fain turn to something brighter, something which should prove to us that these Royal lyrists occasionally entrusted their muse with the bearing of some more joyful message, but these glimpses of sunlight are rare, at least so far as the poems are concerned; and the gloom of captivity hangs over the greater part of them. Now and again some touch of *espéçlerie* brings a

smile to the face, the “ Fair Vestal,” as Shakespeare calls Queen Elizabeth, being responsible for one or two. The story of Sir Walter Raleigh's inscription, diamond-written on the window pane—

“ Fain would I climb,
But that I fear to fall.”

And of the Queen's apt repartee—

“ If thy heart fail thee,
Do not climb at all ”—

is doubtless familiar to every reader, and possibly the same may be said of the three lines for which the diamond was again the pen, traced on the window of the gate-house chamber at Woodstock—

“ Much suspected, of me
Nothing proved can be,
Quoth Elizabeth, prisoner.”

Great interest attaches to the compositions of Henry VIII.'s second wife, the hapless Anne Boleyn, of whom that capricious monarch said: “ She has the wit of an angel,” for in them every coarse and undesirable element is absent. She was a true poetess, and probably had any other lot been chosen for her, her name would have been handed down on the roll of famous writers; as it was, her many and cruel wrongs were her greatest incentive to such effort. Her talent was shared by her brother, Viscount Rochford, the Governor of Dover and the Cinque Ports, whose exquisite lyrics are amongst the most familiar literature of that period, notably the one he wrote the evening before his execution—

“ Farewell my lute, this is the last
Labour that thou and I shall waste.”

The dirge which this most unhappy lady made on herself, and of which I have already quoted the first lines, continues—

“ Ring out the doleful knell,
Let it's sound my death tell,
For I must die,
There is no remedy,
For now I die!

“ My pains who can express?
Alas! they are so strong,
My dolour will not suffer strength
My life for to prolong.



ANNE BOLEYN.

Alone in prison strange,
I wail my destiny;
Woe worth this cruel hap, that I
Should taste this misery.

"Farewell, my pleasures past,
Welcome my present pain,
I feel my torments to increase,
That life cannot remain.
Sound now the passing bell,
Rung is my doleful knell,
For it's sound my death tell,
Death doth draw nigh,
Sound the knell dolefully,
For now I die."

These lines were popular in Elizabeth's reign, but one would think such popularity must have been very painful to the Queen, remembering their author and the terrible grief and desolation which dictated them.

Another of Anne Boleyn's piteous little songs was written after her trial—

"Defiled is my name, full sore,
Through cruel spite and false report,
That I may say for evermore,
Farewell to joy, adieu comfort.

"For wrongfully ye judge of me,
Unto my fame a mortal wound,

Say what ye list, it may not be,
Ye seek for that shall not be found."

Of Queen Elizabeth's poetry there are several pieces preserved, one of the quaintest was presumably written when she was in love with Mountsyre

"When I was fayre and younge, and favour
graced me,
Of many was I soughte their mystres for to be,
But I did scorne them all, and awnswer'de
them therefore
Goe, goe, goe, seeke som other where,
Importune me no more.

"How many weeping eyes I made to pyne with
woe,
How many syghinge hertes I have no skylle to
showe;
Yet I the powder grew, and awnswer'de them
therefore
Goe, goe, goe, seeke som other—where,
Importune me no more.

"Then speake fayre Venus' son, that prowde
victorious boye,
And sayde: 'Fyne Dame, since that you be so
coye,
I will so plucke your plumes that you shall say
no more
Goe, goe, goe, seeke som other—where,
Importune me no more."

"When he had spake these wordes, suche change
grew in my breast,
That neyther nighte nor day since that I could
tak any rest;
Then, loe, I did repente that I had sayde before
Goe, goe, goe, seeke som other—where,
Importune me no more."

ELIZABETH REGINA.

Of the highly-gifted sister of Francis I. of France, and wife of King Henry of Navarre, there is much to record in the way of poetical activity. Marguerite of Angoulême, Queen of Navarre, had no rival in literary attainments amongst the women of the sixteenth century, save, perhaps Vittoria Colonna. Her devotion to her brother, which was so excessive as to have passed into one of the "Household Words of History," combined with her own intellectual nature, led her to become a fellow-student with Francis, their masters in the art of literature being Jean Marot, his son Clement, the famous versifier of the Huguenots, and Mellin de St. Gelais.

"Divinity of the Reformation" is one of the titles of this wonderful Queen, and remembering the important part she played in that great religious movement, it is not surprising to find that many of her compositions have a spiritual trend, although many critics prefer the more sprightly and charming rondeaux and ballads which she indited to the King in her captivity. Here is a specimen of one of these—

"Bien heureuse est la saison et l'année,
Le temps, le point et l'heure terminée,
Le moys, le jour, le lieu et le pourpris,
Où les beaulx yeul je fus lie et pris ;
Tant que prison m'est liberté nommée
Bien heureuse."

And the following is one of the most frequently quoted of her chansons "Spirituelles"—

COUPLET A JÉSUS CHRIST.
"Si de votre bouche plus
Etre baisée,
Je serai de tous ennuis
Bien appaisée,
Baisez-moi, accolez-moi,
Mon cher è poux ;
Unissez-moi, par la foi,
Du tout à vous."

The Queen used to sit at her broidery at the Court of Nerac, with two secretaries by her side, one of whom wrote down the verses she composed out aloud. Many of these were published in 1547 under the title of "Les Marguerites de la Marguerite des Princesses."

When her beloved brother Francis I. died, Marguerite went to the Convent of Tusson, solacing her grief by composing elegies and plaintive songs on her misfortune. One of these desolate poems reads—

"Je n'ay plus n'y mère, n'y père,
N'y soeur, n'y frère,
Sinon Dieu seul auquel j'espère ;
Qui sur le ciel et terre impère.

"J'ay mis du tout en oubliance
Le monde, et parens et amis ;
Biens et honneurs en abondance
Je les tiens pour mes ennemis."

Just before her own death the Queen wrote these lines—her last adieu to poetry—

"Je cherche aultant la croix et la desirer
Comme aultre foys je l'ay voulu fouyr ;
Je cherche aultant par tourment en jouyr
Comme aultre foys j'ay criant son dur martyre,
Car cette croix mon ame à Dieu attire."

The lengthy poem which this remarkable French Queen wrote on the subject of the Reformation — "Le Miroir de l'âme Pecheresse," is a book of very great interest, as it is said to be the faithful representation of the Queen's thoughts and aspirations towards the holy cause. Queen Elizabeth was so much impressed by it that she translated it into English under the title of "A Godly medytacion of the Christen sowle, compiled in Frenche by Lady Margarete, Queene of Navarre; and aptely translated into English by the right vertuose Lady Elyzabeth, daughter to our late sovereyne, King Henry the VIII. Imprimed in the year of our Lorde, 1548, in Aprill."

The sixteenth century was altogether very prolific in women-writers, and the Royal ladies of the time were amongst the most distinguished of these. There are few centuries which can boast of having three



LADY JANE GREY.

such exalted authoresses as the Queen of Navarre, Queen Elizabeth, and Mary Stuart.

The touching verses which Mary Stuart wrote on the death of her young husband are amongst the best specimens which have been preserved of her remarkable poetical talent. Miss Strickland rightly says of them

"None of the numerous translations which have appeared of these stanzas have at all done justice to the tender pathos of the sentiments, the peculiar measure of the verse or the original beauty of the metaphors."

"En mon triste et doux chant
D'un ton fort lamentable,
Je jette un œil trenchant
De perte incomparable.
En soupirs cuisans
Passe mes meilleurs ans.

"Fut-il en un tel mal-heur
De dure destinée ?
N'y si triste douleur
De Dame Fortunée,
Qui mon cœur et mon œil
Vint en bierre et cercueil."

The song in its entirety is too lengthy to quote, but I add the last verse, as it reflects so much of the constancy of the young widowed bride

"Mets, chanson icy fill,
A si triste complainte,
Dont sera le refrain
Amour braye et non feinte,
Pour la separation
N'aura diminution."

The famous and oft quoted "Adieu to France," which the Queen composed on leaving St. Germain-en-Laye (25th of July, 1561) must not be omitted from these souvenirs of royal poetry—

"Adieu, plaisant pays de France,
O ma patrie,
La plus chérie,
Qui as nourri ma jeune enfance
Adieu, France ! Adieu nos beaux jours !
Le nef qui déjoit nos amours,
N'a eu de moi que la moitié :
Une part te reste, elle est tienne :
Je la tié
A ton amitié,
Pour que de l'autre il te souvienné."

The Seigneur de Brantome, in his delightful "Memoires," describes in his quaint way

the sadness of this setting off of the Queen—"A little wind having arisen, they commenced to set the sails, and to weigh the anchor, she without thinking of aught else, rested her two arms on the poop of the galley, and melted into tears which fell in big drops from her lovely eyes, which were rivetted on the port and the beloved country she was leaving, repeating these sad words over and over again during five hours, and refusing to leave the deck and go below to sup—'C'est bien à cette heure, ma chere France, que je vous perds du tout de veüe, puis que la nuit obscure et jalouse du contentement de vous voir tant que jeusse pü, m'apporte un voile noir devant les yeux pour me priver d'un tel bien. Adieu donc, ma chere France, que je vous perds du tout de veüe, je ne vous verray jamais plus.' " Brantome goes on to describe her sleeping on deck, and her strict injunction to the man at the helm to wake her at daybreak if France should not have completely faded from the horizon. Fortune favoured her, for the wind had abated, and having had recourse to the oars, the galley had not made much headway, so with the dawn came also a final view of "fair France," which the Queen enjoyed from her roughly improvised deck bed.

It is not surprising that the literary skill of this beautiful Stuart Queen should have been of so refined and advanced a style, since in manners, and in wit, in fact in every thing she did or said, we see a marked difference to any other Royal personage of her day.

Another Royal poetess who must not be forgotten was George the Third's youngest daughter, the sweet tempered, sorely tried Princess Amelia. Here again we find the most intense sadness as the motive power for the verse-making, for her lameness and often acute sufferings rendered her life a martyrdom. The Princess was deeply religious, and most utterly unselfish. The following lines are always said to have been composed by her when on her death-bed—

"Unthinking, idle, wild, and young,
I laugh'd and danc'd and talk'd and sung;

And proud of health and freedom vain,
 Dream'd not of sorrow, care, or pain ;
 Concluding in those hours of glee
 That all the world was made for me.
 But when the hour of trial came,
 When sickness shook this trembling frame,
 When folly's gay pursuits were o'er,
 And I could dance and sing no more,
 It then occur'd how sad 'twould be
 Were this world only made for me."

Undoubtedly, the Royal poetess *par excellence* of this and of any other time, is Elizabeth, Queen of Roumania, the well-known "Carmen Sylva." Reared in an atmosphere of extreme intellectuality, this gifted lady has been a poetess from her cradle, although it was only after her marriage with Prince Charles of Hohenzollern, that she began to publish, and to really indulge in literary work. The leading idea in all her poems, and their number is legion, is that the two best things in life, the two comforters for those in affliction, are work and patience, and certainly her own career is entirely typical of this sentiment. Carmen



CARME

Sylvia has that most rare of poetical gifts, namely, that of portraying every progression of the soul as clearly as though in each phase she saw her own life reflected. The greater part of her work consists of sad and intensely sympathetic verses, although these are interspersed with some of the gayest songs which

Roumanian life has called forth. In these latter the local colouring is most admirable.

Speaking of her own attainments in the poetical way, she says:—"I am always inspired by what I read, so that Bernstein's 'Thoughts,' especially the description of the Atlantic cable, have made me write seasons." She is also apparently very much impressed by what she sees, and always prone to transmit her own personal sorrows and experiences into impersonal works of

art. Possibly, the death of her little daughter, the Princess Marie, in 1874, proved her impetus in the best specimens of her songs. The one known as "Mother," which follows, and also the sad lines entitled "Longing," are amongst her most pleasing lyrics.

MOTHER.

The sweetest name
this earth around,
The sweetest word in
all speech found,

Is "Mother"!

Yes, none so deep
and tender seems,
Comes quicker; with
such fond thoughts
teems,

As "Mother"

And most of all its
beauty shows,
Lisp'd from a baby's
lips of rose,

“ Ah Mother ” !

Laughed from a baby's lightsome eye,
Babbled from heart of infancy

“ My Mother ” !

Yes, she to whom the dear name's said
Has all her life great goodlihead

As "Mother"!



CARMEN SYLVA.

PRINCELY POETESSES.

But who's had it, and has lost,
Sees earthly happiness quite crossed,
"Sad Mother!"

LONGING.

I long to feel thy little arms embrace,
Thy little silver sounding voice to hear
I long for thy warm kisses on my face,
And for thy bird like carol, blithe and clear
I long for every childish loving word,
And for thy little footsteps, fairy light,
That hither, thither moved, and ever stirred
My heart with them to gladness infinite

And for thy hair I long—
that halo blest,
Hanging in golden glory
round thy brow,
My child, can aught such
longing lull to rest?
Nay, heaven's bliss alone
can end it now.

In many of her other lyrics little Marie figures under the pretty name of "Sonnenkind." The Queen collected all her earlier poems into a little volume entitled "My Travels through the World," and dedicated them to her mother the Princess of Wied, to whom she was greatly attached. One little fragment in this collection—"Nur Eines" (my only one) caused Charles Kingsley to weep, when he first read it

"O let no evil betide her,
No sin her pure heart enthrall,
My God with Thy own hand guide her,
Thou knowest she is my all."

On the death of her great friend, Maria Sulzer, she wrote:

"Draw you nearer,
Let weeping cease,
In her chamber,
All is peace."

Her love for the country of her childhood inspired many beautiful compositions, no

less than the land of her adoption, and whether describing the calm loveliness of the Rhine-land and the peacefulness of her early home—"Monrepos," or the rugged and curious outlines of the Carpathians, and the silver windings of the Dombovitza, the Royal poet is always charming.

On leaving Neuwied to be married, we find the following in her diary

"Thou land of vines, thou leafy shore,
Tara rippling, silver river;
Thy glitter's gone, thy song is o'er,
Parted we are for ever."

And of the Dombovitza she writes:—

"Dombovitza! magic river,
Silver shining, memory haunted,
He who drinks thy crystal waters
Ne'er can quit thy shores enchanted.

"Dombovitza! all too deeply
Drank I of thy flowing river;
For my love, my inmost being,
There meseems have sunk for ever.

"Dombovitza! Dombovitza!
All my soul hast thou in keeping,
Since beneath thy banks of verdure
Lies my dearest treasure sleeping."



PRINCESS HELENE OF NAPLES.

Carmen Sylva is not only able to write in German and in Roumanian, but she can clothe her thoughts in the most scholarly and perfectly chosen French, and in this latter tongue has successfully attempted some verses in dialect. The reply in the form of a sonnet, which she made to the *Félibres de Lar*,* who invited her to visit Provence, shows her wonderful versatility:—

* An alliance of authors and learned men in the South of France.

"De gracieux noms suis appelée,
Venir ne puis,
Par tems et-devoir enchainé,
Oiseau ne suis."

As a young girl she composed two English poems, one being a religious attempt, "Serve the Lord with gladness," and the other a little description of Neuwied, "My sunny home."

Her duties as a Queen prevent Carmen Sylva writing as prolifically as she herself would wish. She admits that she often has to remind herself that she is first a wife, secondly the mother of her country, and lastly a poetess. With this description of the beautiful city of Bucharest, we must leave the Roumanian poet-sovereign :—

"Where crags the ancient forest crown,
Where mountain streams dance wild adown,
And countless blossoms spread;
There lies the land, all glad and green,
Where I am Queen!"

The excellent English renderings of these poems are from the pen of Sir Edwin Arnold.

The following is the literal translation of a poem composed by the Princess Hélène of Montenegro just before her marriage with the Prince of Naples. She inherits her poetic instincts from her father, Prince Nicholas :—

"The mother said to her daughter,
'If you wish to see what the world is like,
You must keep your eyes always open.'
She kept her eyes open, and this is what was
revealed to her :—

She saw a majestic fountain.
She saw wonderful vales.
She saw the shining of the stars.
She saw the sombre waves of the sea.
She saw the white ripples of rivers.
She saw the flowers in their variety of colour.
She saw the birds with their beautiful plumage.
She saw the golden ears of waving corn.

She gently bent the head, and closed her eyes,
Then she saw what was to her most beautiful :—

She saw the portrait of the Loved One,
Whom she pressed to her heart.
She saw the portrait of the Loved One,
Who reigned in her soul.
She saw the portrait of the Loved One,
Whose love responded to her love."

LAURA ALEX. SMITH.

THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM.

A BEGINNER in Journalism will do well to remember that she must always give an editor exactly what he asks for. The editor as a rule knows what he wants, and why he wants it, and he is not likely to ever consider anything else. If he asks for a "synopsis" he does not want an analytical criticism, and he will not take one, however good it is. Or if he does, it is because he has depended on your carrying out his directions, and has made no arrangements for your failing him. In that case he may print what you send, but he will remember you as a writer who cannot be trusted to do the thing she has been asked to do. Of course the case of a well-known and popular writer is entirely different. When a writer is known and loved by the public, any word he or she says on any subject is of interest to the world. The subject, as Oliver Wendell Holmes has put it, gains by the whole weight of that writer's personality. If Kipling, or Anstey, or "Lucas Malet" were to write on any subject whatever we should be eager to know what they thought upon it. The subject would not matter, it is their view of the subject which would interest us. The unknown beginner has not this advantage, the general public does not care in the least what she thinks personally, and, therefore, her article, if it is to succeed, must be of value in itself. The editor knows - or what comes to exactly the same thing so far as the would-be contributor is concerned, thinks he knows - exactly what his public wants, and, therefore, if any girl wishes a place in his paper, she must on no account send in one thing when he has asked for another.

Another important point is length. To the writer it seems a pity to spoil an article for a few hundred words or two, but the editor who has asked for five hundred words is no more likely to print a thousand than you, if your dining-room recess was only five feet

wide, would be likely to buy a sideboard measuring six feet.

The six-foot sideboard may be the more beautiful—it may be the cheaper. You may personally prefer it, but it does not fit your space, so you cannot take it. If, on the other hand, you were the person selling the sideboard, you would be horrified at the suggestion of sawing bits off the ends to make it fit. But suppose you had been warned beforehand of the size of the recess, how foolish it would have been to carelessly or deliberately make the sideboard too big for it.

The last two months in setting the subjects stress was laid on brevity, and most of the articles sent in were at least twice the required length.

Now here it was not, of course, a question of space, since the articles were not to be printed. The question was simply which of the scholars would write what is required and which would not; which would carefully arrange her ideas to the required form—a matter which needs not only care, but skill and capacity.

An editor, for the reason already given, namely, because he has depended on the one writer, and has to make the best of what she has sent in, will often take the over long article and cut it to the required length. But this often spoils the article as much as sawing off the ends would spoil the sideboard in my simile—he has no time to compress, he can only omit. The writer of the article generally feels that the very paragraphs have been omitted which she would have preferred to reserve, even at cost of longer ones. And in nine cases out of ten if she tries she will find she could have said just as much in the required number of words as she has said in her over long article if she had given more time to it, and arranged her matter more carefully. To say much in a few words is the secret of good writing.

One or two of our scholars seem to know

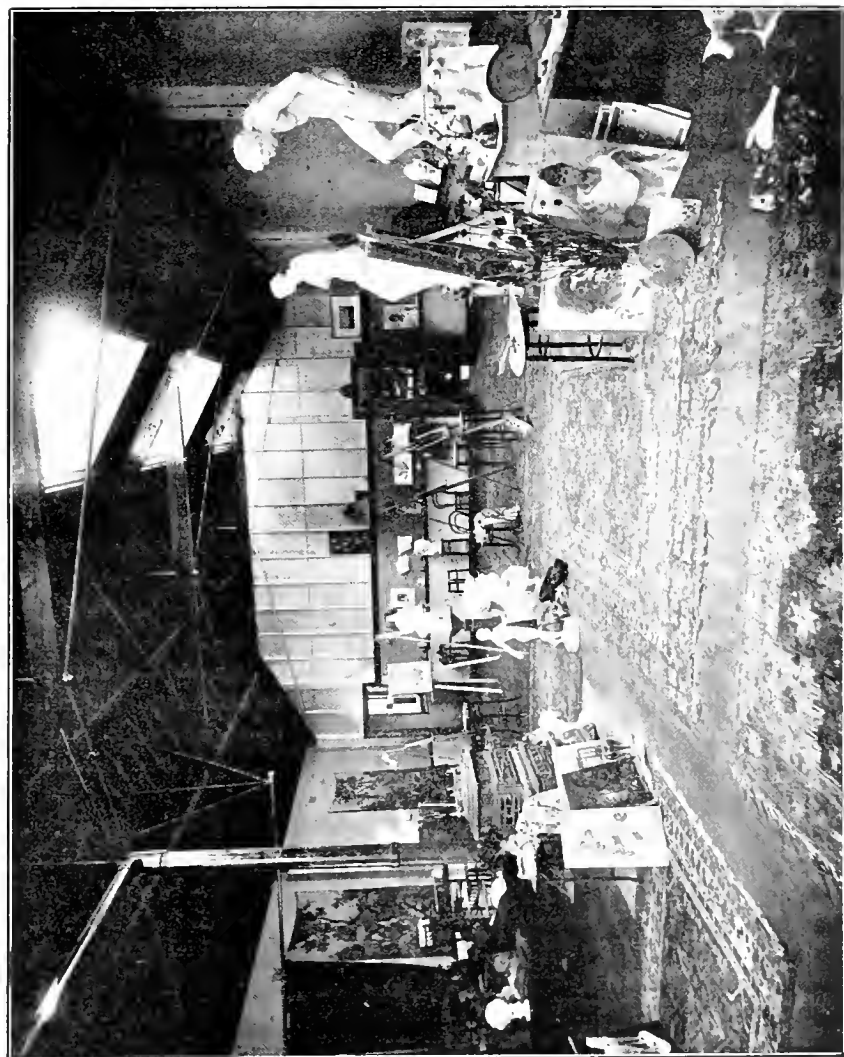
this, and their papers give evidence of having been carefully thought out, either before or while writing.

It is no use trying to give rules as to the best method of setting to work. Some writers spend a long time deciding what they will say, and how they will say it, before they so much as approach the writing table. Then they write down in a few moments the result of hours of thought. Others can not even begin to think until they have dipped their pens in the ink. I know of one novelist whose method is to sit down at her table and write at lightning speed everything that occurs to her just as it comes, good and bad, without order or sequence. Next day she goes over her work, reduces the quantity by omissions, arranges the thoughts in sequence, polishes the sentences, and re-copies her amended sheets. There is no trace in her finished work of the haphazard way in which it is done. Another well-known writer sits calmly at her desk, thinks as she writes, writes as slowly as if she were setting copies in text-hand, but never has to make a single correction.

Writers can do their work in any way they like, following their natural impulses; their method is no one's affair but their own, so long as when it is done it shows no sign of inconsequence of thought or carelessness of construction.

The subject for April will be a descriptive paper on some place of interest, either scenery or architecture, in the writer's neighbourhood, not to exceed a thousand words. Next month the question of interviewing will be discussed.

Will each scholar please put her name and address distinctly on the first page, even when she encloses an envelope. Some MSS. have no names at all, and can only be identified by comparison with the envelopes, not always a sure means.



THE "YELLOW DOOR" STUDIO.

A T "THE YELLOW DOOR."

"THE Yellow Door" there it stands like some old sign of olden bygone days, and yet it is the modern product of a modern age, and made to meet the requirements of the modern maiden. "The Yellow Door" you cannot help noticing it as you pass down Church Hill, Beckenham, and it is artistic even to the door-plate, which is of beaten copper, worked by Mr. Spenlove himself, and on which you can read "Spenlove School of Art." Fair maidens, lovers and seekers of the beautiful, come! enter in, for here you will find the path of art pleasant, soft as the many rugs that adorn the bright studio. It is a by-way on the plain of art, where you may wander over smooth meadows beside a gentle stream; for Mr. Spenlove's great aim is not so much to produce artists as art-lovers, and to give that knowledge which will make you appreciate hard and fine work in others, rather than fill an already over-crowded field. But to the earnest students there is also a word, do not pause and stop upon the threshold of that "Yellow Door," saying sadly, "This is no place for me. I want work, hard work," for when true talent comes his way Mr. Spenlove will do all he can to foster it; otherwise why should he have offered this free scholarship in ATALANTA; and for the benefit of these workers I will give an account of the school working. First, "The Yellow Door" is but five minutes from Beckenham Station, and omnibuses from Catford, Forest Hill, and Sydenham pass the door, so that it is accessible from many points.

The School is open only three days a week, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, from 10.30 a.m. to 1 o'clock, thus leaving plenty of time for home work, other studies, or pleasures; then in the Summer, sketching classes from nature are organised under the personal direction of Mr. Spenlove himself, while during the Winter months these give place to the "Sketching Club." The Club,

which gives subjects every month in figure, landscape, etc., for the members to work out, is not restricted to the school students; any-one wishing to join can apply to the Principal for the "Sketching Club" prospectus. All the drawings sent in are exhibited in the Studio each month, and the members may invite their friends to these exhibitions; and at the end of the Sketching Club session, prizes are given to the students whose works have gained the highest number of marks. This "Sketching Club" is splendid practice for landscape and figure composition, and specially intended to promote and encourage the study of Nature and originality.

Excepting the study of the nude, almost every branch of art is embraced in the "Spenlove School." Design, perspective, anatomy, drawing from the cast and the living model, painting in oil, water colours, and pastel, theory of colour, still-life and flowers, composition, etching, and black and white for illustration; they one and all receive their share of attention, and all work is done direct from natural objects and life, nothing from the flat.

Animals, also, sometimes take their part as models, for the Studio is large and on the ground floor; thus horses even can be admitted. It is well lit, too, with a fine top light, and, while cool in Summer, is thoroughly heated in the Winter by a well-arranged hot water system. Its size and beauty, beside the multiplicity in style of work, may be seen in the illustration, where casts, ancient and modern, vie with nature in the shape of landscape, flower groups, and figure, in the training of the art student. The door on the right leads to a smaller studio, which is Mr. Spenlove's own sanctum, thus giving him a haven of refuge if students or models prove too exasperating; "just a little way they have" sometimes.

Mr. Spenlove built and opened the School on his own account little more than a year ago, and already it numbers over 60 students. Its origin would form an amusing anecdote, only as it is more connected with the artist

than the Schools, and as this is an account of the Schools more than the artist, I fear I must leave it untold.

The School is not open all the year, but is divided into three terms of twelve weeks each, commencing the second Monday in January, the third Monday in April, and the fourth Monday in September, thus giving three weeks at Christmas, a fortnight about Easter, and ten weeks in the summer for holiday work. Students may join at any time, but must give half a term's notice before leaving; also, no work done in the school may be taken away before the end of each session without the permission of the Principal, and that must be brought for inspection during the last week.

I must not forget to mention for the benefit of the young ones that there is a special Drawing Class for pupils under 14, on Wednesday afternoons and Saturday mornings, which lasts for two hours. One word more, fellow workers, before we part. Try all you can for the "Spenlove Scholarship." I am sure you will find ready help up the path of art; yet readers, who are blessed with the gift that rounds and softens the sharp corners of life, do not try *too* hard, but leave the best chance to your less fortunate sisters.

Since the above was written, Mr. Spenlove has formed a special "Landscape School," the classes for which will be held on the Tuesdays and Thursdays of the school term from 10 till 1 and from 2 till 5, and which he hopes will be of great use to students who

wish to follow art professionally, to whom he offers special advantages. The system of training is, to quote from the prospectus:—"The process of painting from the 'sketch' to the 'finished picture'—What to see in nature and its pictorial treatment—Method—Management of pigment—Simplification, and the true meaning of 'breadth'—Effect in composition and force of contrast—



A "YELLOW DOOR" STUDY.

Importance of 'tone' and 'values'—Theory and harmony of colour—Arrangement of light and shade—'Picture making'—General composition and quality in technique—etc."

Though at present only a limited number of students can be accommodated, Mr. Spenlove believes that this special school will be such a success that he is contemplating building two new studios, for which he has the ground. Also he will be pleased to criticise the students' outside works if they are brought to him during the latter part of the class.

MAUD J. VYSE.



CROCUSES.

BEATRICE O'BRIEN sat perfectly still by the open piano, her left hand resting on the keys.

The sunshine—what greater deceiver is there than the sun?—was doing its best to give an untrue appearance to the room. Whereas, in reality, it was an uncomfortable abode, the sun tried gloriously to make the place appear bright and pretty. It was a vain endeavour, for there was nothing found to respond to the warm cheerfulness except the girl's bright hair, which was red-gold, and shone and sparkled in the sun, and a few crocuses in the window-box outside, for it was March.

Beatrice was an orphan, and had lived alone, supporting herself, for the last three years. To tell the truth, she was not so very young when she began to grapple with the stern realities of life, not so young as many others to be found at the present moment in our great towns, for to-day was her twenty-fifth birthday. A tiny annuity had been settled upon her by an uncle, who had since died just sufficient to keep her from actual starvation, but not enough to protect her from the pangs of hunger; so when Beatrice found herself forsaken, involuntarily it is true, for it was only at the call of Death (who accepts no excuse) that her uncle left her, she turned over in her mind her plans with regard to earning enough to make both ends meet. Except in accomplishments, her education had been defective, for her uncle, who spent his life among books, had not realised till too late, when Death was looking him in the face, that his niece would be dependent on herself for the greater part of her livelihood.

After the funeral, Beatrice took an unfurnished room, and filled it with the more useful of her uncle's furniture, and the proceeds of the sale of the rest for a short time richly augmented her annuity. All her love for music (which was great) and her

talent (which was small) Beatrice combined, and had hitherto earned a scant income by setting melodies to words. Of course, having no capital to spare, she worked for a publishing firm, and as this firm was very far down in the social scale of the musical world, her earnings were small.

A bad rheumatic cold, which had necessitated complete idleness and better food, had exhausted her store of money, and this morning she sat breakfastless waiting for inspiration.

To be inspired one must be ready to wait, and, perhaps, to wait long; and surely, if by waiting one can be inspired, the game is worth the candle! Waiting, however, when prolonged, is usually wearisome. A prolonged waiting, with no breakfast at one end and very little chance of a dinner at the other, is more than wearisome, it is often hope-destroying.

Beatrice's hope was dying; for two hours she sat, the sunbeams meanwhile playing with her red hair. At last she looked up, and saw the crocuses outside spreading forth eagerly their six petals to the sun. She shut her eyes again, and memory painted a picture on her brain. Just an old-fashioned room, with large windows framed in ivy leaves, which were rustling in the wind. The sunshine flickered in and out between the leaves, making a shadow here and a gold place there. Outside, a long narrow path, and both sides of this—crocuses, yellow, white, and violet. In the distance a dark-haired schoolboy, carrying with mock pomp a dead bullfinch to the grave which had been dug for it in the wilderness beyond.

It was a picture from Beatrice's childhood. At Malden Grange she had visited, and it was there that her love for music first awakened, for her playmate, Herbert Edwards, a boy a couple of years her senior, who was a chorister at the beautiful cathedral near, had insisted upon her practising diligently in order that she might accompany him when he sang. There music had first appealed to Beatrice.

As she remembered this, and how that music had now forsaken her, she bent her head and wept, not passionately, but quietly. Perhaps the tears cleared her brain, for almost before they were dry a melody whispered itself into her heart, rose to her brain, and impelled her to interpret it on the piano. The notes were so sweet they almost frightened her; it was the very melody she had been searching after for the last three years, and at last she had caught it.

That afternoon Beatrice took her music out with the intention of selling it as soon as possible to the publishers who usually bought her work. The March sun had set, and the March wind was boisterous, and the rain beat a pitiless accompaniment on the pavement to Boreas' rude yells.

Under an old umbrella, Beatrice tried in vain to protect herself from the weather. At last she grew desperate, and shut it down. It is an advantage in a crowded London thoroughfare, either from necessity or from choice, to eschew all artificial shelter. Umbrella-less, a pathway can be easily threaded among those people who prefer to protect their own headgear, although often at the expense of others.

It was with the calm self-possession of complete confidence that Beatrice entered the musical dépôt.

"The manager is out, miss," replied the clerk to her enquiries. "He won't be in to-night."

It appeared that the under-manager was in, and Beatrice demanded an interview.

In a small inner room sat Mr. Wigginton, the under-manager, smoking. Of course he did not deem it necessary on the girl's entrance to remove his hat or lay down his cigar. Both these civilities he knew to be due to a lady, but Beatrice was a girl who earned her own living, which, to Mr. Wigginton's mind, clearly proved that she was not a lady.

Before Beatrice had time to unroll her music he began,

"By the bye, Miss O'Brien, I am glad to see you. I wanted to tell you that we shall not require to see any more of your talented productions; we find they don't take."

In desperation, and swallowing her pride, Beatrice asked,

"Won't you just look at this air? I feel sure it is a much more taking melody than any of my others."

"It may be, and it mayn't—I daresay it is! but it would only waste your time and mine for me to look it through. Good evening!"

In silent anger and disappointment Beatrice gave him a look which caused Mr. Wigginton to blush for very shame. He put down his cigar, and lifting his hat, opened the door for her, adding, as she passed out:

"I should try the shop over the way, if I were you."

She stood still in the rain outside almost unconscious, so surprised was she. She had absolutely counted on getting at least a pound or two for this music. She was convinced in her soul that the music was pretty and taking. Looking up, she noticed that the name on the door just opposite was that of a well-known firm of musical publishers, and Mr. Wigginton's parting shot, "I should try the shop over the way, if I were you," sounded in her ears.

She crossed the road and entered the building. In the room into which she was shown were two men; the one a tall, grey-haired, broad-shouldered man, with kind dark eyes, the other, whose back was turned, a younger, shorter man, also with broad shoulders, and close cut black hair.

Taking her manuscript, the elder of the two turned to the piano, and, sitting down, played the melody through. The younger man was standing close by, glancing through a volume of poems. Beatrice sat perfectly still in the chair that had been offered her, almost too sick with suspense to breathe.

"What's that you're playing, sir?" the younger man exclaimed, putting down his book and looking over the other's shoulder at the music before him. "Just play it over

TRIOLETS.

again, will you?" he added, as the last bars breathed into silence.

The voice seemed familiar to Beatrice, and she thought perhaps she had met the man in a dream; she could not remember having spoken to him in real life.

"It is a curious thing," he said, and he whistled the melody through again. "It is a curious thing! This reminds me of home. Of home and sunlight; yes, and of the room where I first learnt to sing. There was an old wide window to it. Outside the ivy grew thickly. Just outside, a narrow path, bordered with box and crocuses, yellow, white, and violet, led away to the wilderness, where snowdrops grew wild, ever so many of them. I should think they must be out now! It was there I buried my pet bullfinch."

"By George!" he said, presently, "that air will take! I'll sing it at the concert next week in St. James's Hall."

The elder man smiled. "If *you* say the melody will do, it is enough," he said.

Beatrice went home with a heavy purse. When she got in she had a good cry, perhaps because she was happy, perhaps because she was miserable, perhaps, like most women whose education has been neglected, for no reason at all. The man who had bought her song was Herbert Edwards, the great tenor singer, and the playmate of her childhood.

But it is not only women who remember. And the snowdrops were out in the wilderness when they went down to see. I suppose it was a late season, for, as everyone knows, they are February maids. The crocuses, of course, were out, and he declared that her hair was more golden-red than they.

RUTH YOUNG.

T RIOLETS.

Thus was I dreaming
By the dark sea,
'Neath the stars beaming,
Thus was I dreaming
While the tide, streaming,
Whispered to me;
Thus was I dreaming
By the dark sea.

Love will awaken
Here on Life's shore,
Faith kept unshaken—
Love will awaken,
Feel not forsaken
For —evermore;
Love will awaken
Here on Life's shore.

MAY ROWLAND.





"I HAVE done such a dreadful thing," said the bride, dropping into her seat with an air of living misery and remorse. "Such a very dreadful thing."

"I'm sure you did not do it on purpose," said the girl of three seasons promptly.

"Oh, no. It was one of those things which would be less insulting if they were done as intentional rudeness: it was because my rudeness was unintentional that the man will never forgive me," said the bride miserably, "and I do so hate making people dislike me."

"As a rule, two-thirds of the people who are disliked don't deserve it," said the chaperon. "Tell us your accident."

"I met a man just now whom I like pretty well. I was in a hurry, and had several people to see in a short time. This man got me hedged into a corner, and said, 'I want to explain why I did not come to your party.'"

"Had you expected him?" asked the engaged girl.

"I had asked him—as one asks everyone who is on one's visiting list. I wanted him to come if he wanted to, that's all. I didn't for the moment remember whether he had been there or not."

"Naturally," said the chaperon. "If one has a visiting book in order that one may not, by a slip of memory, slight acquaintances by leaving any out, one can't hold it in one's hand at a party and check off the guests as they arrive. Go on with your confession."

"Well, I was sorry he couldn't come if he wanted to come, but the reason didn't matter very much. So I began by listening to his

explanation with an air of polite attention, but presently my thoughts wandered, and I was planning how to get all I had to do crowded into three-quarters of an hour. I didn't mean to be rude; it didn't really matter to him whether I listened or not."

"Perhaps not, so long as you appeared to listen politely," said the chaperon.

"That was just it. He ended his explanation without a climax. He didn't change his voice or position, or give a single sign that the explanation *was* approaching the end; he just stopped, and there was I, with doubtless the polite expression of interest still on my face, quite unconscious that he was not still talking."

The rest laughed, but the laugh was sympathetic, and the chaperon suggested that the best atonement of the involuntary rudeness would be a few special words of hope that nothing would come in the way a second time accompanying the next invitation.

"But it is very horrid to have to listen when you are not interested," said the debutante. "A girl played a very mean trick on me the other day. She is one of those girls who always want to ingratiate themselves with everyone. She and I were sitting together, and there was a man present whom she was trying to please, so she said to him very sweetly, 'Do tell me exactly how indiarubber is made,' and he began and went on, and it was all very dull indeed, and presently she saw some one she cared even more to please, so she just got up and went away, and he finished the explanation to me. I didn't care a bit how indiarubber was made, but I had to listen to the very end, because

it would have been too abominably rude for both of us to get up and go when the question had been asked."

"Never mind," said the engaged girl consolingly. "He would go away thinking you a nice intelligent girl, who took an interest in practical things."

"Oh no he wouldn't," said the debutante gloomily. "He was a little near sighted, and I don't think he ever knows one young girl from another young girl. She would get all the credit for intelligent interest in practical things; I only had the boredom."

"Never mind," said the chaperon. "We must all get bored sometimes, remembering in our hearts how often we have bored others," to paraphrase a proverb of Solomon.

"Talking of indiarubber," said Cousin May. "I saw such a delightful thing in an indiarubber shop window the other day, a big circular waterproof in rich cardinal. I wish some of you well-to-do-people would get one. They are as useful as dingy-looking water-proofs, and very much more beautiful."

"That's just like Cousin May," said the bride. "Whenever she sees a nice thing and thinks she can't afford it herself, she wants some one else to have it. When I was furnishing, whenever she saw anything very pretty that she would have liked for her own rooms she used to come and tell me about it, and was quite content if it came to my house instead of her's."

"It's not unselfishness," said May. "It is only that I like to see pretty things even if I can't wear them or have them."

"I quite understand," said the chaperon. "I could not wear a cardinal waterproof myself. I am too big. But a slim girl who wore one in the rain would not only look well herself, but would cheer up the whole street on a dull day. Everyone who met her would feel grateful to her."

"£28,000 subscribed in a few days for the famine in India," the younger sister suddenly read aloud from the paper at which she had been glancing. "What a lot of money."

"Not so very much, after all, to fight a

famine with," said the chaperon. "It will all be needed, and more. But one can't help feeling a little cheered. Have you never noticed that though we are always praising foreigners, and foreigners are always praising us, the most envious and spiteful foreigners can't say we are mean. A famine, a flood, or a disaster of any kind in any country—Russia, India, Armenia, or anywhere else, has only to be mentioned in London for subscriptions to pour in."

"One can't help wishing sometimes," said Cousin May, "that England was a little more generous to England. That our own worn-out old poor in the workhouse had a better time, for instance, even if we gave less to foreign countries; but, after all, the resolution put in force at Christmas that no inmate of a workhouse who had not done the allotted task of work, irrespective of whether the work was not done through age, illness, or real inability, or mere idleness, which deserved to be punished, has been condemned by the authorities, and India is our own territory, so it is our business to take care of it."

"I was pleased," said the chaperon, "to read an article in *Le Soleil*, pointing out how much rarer famines have been in India since we have ruled it, and that our rule there is not only beneficial to India, but to the world at large. When I grumbled just now of the injustice of foreigners I had forgotten that article in *Le Soleil*. I must lend it to you; it is not only a just judgment, but an ungrudgingly just judgment of us."

We have been pleased to receive a pretty volume of verse, *The Flowering of the Almond Tree*, by Christian Burke, whose writings will be familiar to readers of *ATLANTA* in the past. The poems, which have been collected from many of the leading Magazines, show unusual grace and freedom of expression, and deserve a permanent place in the poetry of to-day. The publishers are Messrs. Blackwood & Sons.

A TALANTA CLUB.

SHOULD WIVES HAVE REGULAR OCCUPATION BEYOND THEIR HOUSEHOLD DUTIES?

UNLESS her household duties are so manifold as to require her whole time and attention for their proper performance, I certainly think a wife should have some occupation, whatever it may be, which will lift her from the worries of mere "domestic" life, and give her interests and occupations beyond the arrangement of the *menu* and the care of her clothes. Of wives who are also mothers I am not speaking now; were that subject entered into it might be found that the responsibilities of motherhood are incompatible with much that a childless woman may undertake with impunity. I speak only to wives *as* wives, and to them I say: By all means let your household duties come *first*; allow nothing to interfere with your solicitude for your husband's comfort and the proper management of your home; but, these attended to, find some occupation—you yourself best know in which direction your gifts or disposition lie—and pursue it regularly and systematically. Secure your husband's approbation and sympathy, and induce him to see that there is *not*, as some would tell us, in mere domestic ups and downs all that a rational woman requires to keep her happy and employed. Your household occupations will gain additional charm if they do not exclude all others, and variety of interests will enlarge your mind, and prevent your degenerating into that trying person, the woman whose sole conversational topics are her wardrobe's latest acquisition and the delinquencies of her servants!

MARY A. E. TINDALL.

A WIFE'S first duty is to her husband; the tasks of keeping his home attractive, of spending his money to the best advantage, of entertaining his friends should have the first claim on her time. But house-keeping is a much simpler matter nowadays than it was in the days of our grandmothers, and the mistress of a household, her after-breakfast hour of accounts finished, often finds herself with no definite duties for the day. It is a great change for a girl, who, before marriage, has been fully occupied with work of some sort, to find her time thus at her own disposal. Unless she finds plenty to do, she is apt to worry too much over trifles, to grow narrow-minded and gossiping, if no worse. It is far better for her to have some regular work than to trust for occupation to circumstances and chance. The lives of many writers and artists prove that a woman need not be prevented from fulfilling her home duties because she has a career of her own. Among the poor it is a matter of course that the wife should earn what she can—why should not other wives do the same? In many middle-class households the struggle to make both ends meet might be made much easier if the wife's earnings were added to her

husband's, and she would be better employed thus than in the ceaseless worrying which makes so many women old and careworn ere their time.

EFFIE MACRINTOSH.

UNLESS by necessity, I should say certainly not. A woman who does justice to her home and herself has not, as a rule, too much time on her hands, though naturally the case must depend somewhat on the size of house and family. The ideal management of a house is an occupation in itself, not necessarily shutting out other interests, but requiring a mind sufficiently free to allow of infinite detail, apparently trifling, but most important to the comfort, and consequently to the good temper, of the various members of the household. Then these small things in a house need to be carried out with a quiet orderliness, which prevents detail becoming aggressive (always a danger to the "Marthas" of society), and I think all will admit that this quietness can never be coupled with haste. Yet when a woman has an occupation apart from her household duties there is of necessity a "crowding out" or hurrying of something, and this something is almost bound to be a part of the home duties, because home grumbling can be faced with greater equanimity than the remarks of strangers on neglected work. Regular occupation, once taken up, cannot be dropped when inconvenient; yet many occasions occur in a house when its mistress alone can put the crooked straight, and how smoothly run the household wheels when she is in her place to apply the necessary oil.

ALICE M. BOSVILLE JAMES.

THAT every woman should seek some occupation apart from her household duties surely no one will deny. Whether that occupation should be regular is quite another question. In most cases it would also be quite impracticable. How can a woman, who conscientiously fulfils her duties as wife, mother, and hostess, devote her days, or even part of them, to regular work? There are so many things in a house that must be done, trivial in themselves, but which, if left undone, would place a whole household in chaos. Everyone knows by comparison the difference between a house where the mistress gives her thought and care to her household duties and one where all is left to servants. Nowadays so much more is required of a housewife than formerly. Everything must be done personally, because it must be done better, and more fully; no details should be too small, or beneath the dignity of a good housewife. Like the poor, household duties are ever with you. There are children to be looked after, husbands to be cheered and sometimes "waited upon," home matters to be superintended. While such conditions last, regular occupation for the mistress of a house is quite out of the question, woman's life must still be "an interrupted sentence," and the world will never know how many Brontës and George Eliots have been destroyed by the burden of commonplace and daily routine.

L. PEARCE.

ATALANTA CLUB.

Subject for March: "Do great riches tend to happiness?" Papers must not exceed *two hundred and fifty words*, and must be sent in on or before March 25th. Prizes of five shillings will be awarded to each of the four best papers, which will be published in the body of the Magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

Describe the Execution of Charles I., as by a spectator, in the first person. Analyse the character of the younger Pitt. Write twelve lines of verse in the metre of *Sea Sapphics*, published in this issue. Subject for the School of Journalism will be found on page 366. All papers must be sent in on or before March 25th. Essays must not exceed 500 words. Members may only enter for one of these subjects. Full rules for the above will be found among the advertising pages at the end of this number.

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (FEBRUARY).

I.

1. Lord Herbert of Cherbury, eldest brother of the poet, George Herbert.
2. George Herbert.

II.

1. It means the custom, derived from Pagan times, of lighting fires on the 1st May. It is a festival celebrated with various superstitious rites, both in Wales and the North of Scotland.
2. From the Breton or Norman original of the comic tale, the Boy and the Mantle, given in the third volume of Percy's Reliques.
3. A pin was thrown in, in passing.
4. The wearing of the ancient buckskin, which was made of undressed deer's hide, with the hair outwards.

III.

1. From "O Nanny, wilt thou go with me?" by Thomas Percy, D.D., Bishop of Dromore.
2. "Tell me, Thou soul," James Thomson.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR MARCH.

I.

1. Who was Lord of the Isles at the period of Sir Walter Scott's poem?
2. Explain the meaning of the old English word, "chere?"
3. About what time did it become obsolete?

II.

From what poems are these quotations taken?

1. "To hear our very breath intrude
Upon the boundless solitude."
2. "My heart is like the fair sea-shell,
There's music ever in it."

III.

1. Give the origin of the name "Pall Mall."
2. Which poet is it said of that "He writes a lamentable hand, as bad as the scratching of a hen."

IV.

1. By this image the Platonists expressed the middle state of the soul between sensible and intellectual existence.
2. It was a method of polishing pearls, by leaving them awhile to be played with by doves.

V.

1. "I found the casket rifled,
And all my treasure gone.
2. "One kind kiss then ere we part,
Drop a tear, and bid adieu."
3. "For, in pure love, Heaven did prepare
Those powders to enrich your hair."
4. "By that flower there is a bower
Where the heavenly muses meet."

VI.

1. An old English word for *breadth*.
2. Blee, complexion. Sweens, dreams.

IV.

Give authors of quotations—

1. "Hence, all yon vain delights,
As short as are the nights,
Wherein you spend your folly!"
2. "The glories of our birth and state
Are shadows, not substantial things,"
3. "Unclose those eyelids, and outshine
The brightness of the breaking day!"

V.

1. What is the tradition of "The bird's release"?
2. Also that of the "Messenger Bird"?

VI.

Give authors of quotations—

1. "Arise, get up, my dear, make haste, begone thee."
2. "Send home my long stray'd eyes to me."
3. "Do you not know how Love first lost his seeing."



H EPATICA AND SNOWDROP.

GARDEN, put on the livery of Spring,
Blue of hepatica and snowdrop white,
Let these break your brown clods as day breaks night,
With timid hints of birds about to sing,
Heart, hast thou not a livery to wear?
White for the promise of delight to be,
And blue for faith that has no wings to flee
But chirps instead of singing high in air.
Heart sing a little: since the thrushes sing
Faintly and shyly, till the notes ring true—
My heart and garden, all in white and blue,
Make merry 'gainst the coming of the Spring!

NORA HOPPER.



From a Poem by Mr. Murray C. C. C.

FASCINATION.

PHILOPENA.

BY DR. ERNEST ECKSTEIN.

OVER the old-fashioned garden lay the smile of the September sun. A boy of sixteen, his clever, handsome face glowing with the pride and fire of youth, strode across to the honeysuckle arbour, in which, on a bright green painted bench, sat a lovely slender girl with a book in her hand.

"Am I disturbing you?" asked the boy.

The girl looked up.

"Oh, it's you, is it, Theodore?"

"Yes, Aunt Marie. Did you expect someone else?"

"No; of course not," replied Marie Sanders. "But I thought you were busy with your lessons?"

"Oh, there's no hurry about those, Auntie. There are other things more important. I've been trying for several days to get a chance of speaking to you quite alone."

"Indeed? That sounds almost solemn."

"It *is* solemn. But rather comic, too. Perhaps you'll only make fun of me."

"I'm getting quite curious. Just sit down here and tell me all about it at once."

"Auntie, I've something extraordinary to tell you. Our Professor is over head and heels in love with you!"

The girl blushed crimson.

"Nonsense! What makes you think so?"

"Oh, I've thought so for a long time, and lately I've grown quite sure of it. But when one comes to think of it, it's no wonder! I'm your nephew, but I must say you're the nicest, jolliest girl I know."

"Good gracious, boy, what are you chattering about? How old are you now?"

"I shall be seventeen in April, so I am old enough to have an opinion in the matter. Well, Professor Lotichius loves you to distraction. Of course, you, in your simplicity, have never noticed it. But I have read him through and through; without his knowledge, I need hardly say. He is so bashful, he

would like to keep it a secret for ever. Great scholars are just like children in such affairs; and he's a tip-top archaeologist, although he is only twenty-eight. Our class-master said so this very day——"

"Theodore, how can you?——"

"Now, don't look as if you would like to devour me! I'm a sympathetic person, and I thought it my duty to speak, seeing that the idiotic want of self-confidence threatens the happiness of two people. Lotichius, in his bashful humanity, naturally imagines that Marie Sanders, the much-admired and greatly-flattered blonde beauty—as Homer would say—is a hundred times too good for him."

"Oh!" gasped Marie.

"Yes, I know," laughed Theodore, knowingly. "You don't share that opinion. Should I have mentioned the subject at all if I had not been quite convinced that my beautiful Aunt was, in her inmost heart, just as fond of the Professor as he of her?"

"Be quiet, this minute! If you ever dare——"

"I repeat, my little wild-rose Aunt; you need not get into such a frenzy! Of course, this is a profound secret between ourselves. I am discretion itself. But you can't drive the truth out of the world. Do you think I didn't see that you imagined it was Professor Lotichius coming into the arbour a few minutes ago? Auntie—Auntie! your head is full of him."

"You dreadful boy; you quite frighten me!"

"Yes, don't I? I'm a born thought-reader—the future lawyer, as you find him in books. But do listen for a minute, while I tell you how I went to work with old Lotichius to get proofs, then you can see for yourself how it is. Will you?"

"What can I do? You have taken me so by surprise."

"Well, it was last Monday, as I was going for a walk with our Professor in the Hasswald. began to talk about you, just

to see how he would take it. You can't imagine how enthusiastic I was, singing your praises through thick and thin. I wish you had seen the effect it had upon him. He hadn't the least suspicion that my fanatical hymn of praise was got up for his benefit. At first he agreed with everything, even my most extravagant assertions, and was evidently so excited that one must have been a regular duffer not to have heard his passionate heart-beats quite plainly. Now, don't interrupt; let me finish. You think I compromised you? Indeed, I did nothing of the kind. I talked as if I felt an irresistible desire to express my opinion of you—as if I were rather 'gone' on you myself, as I am, really. By jove! little Aunt, if I were only ten years older, I should know how to make ardent speeches as well as most people."

He threw his arm violently round her neck, and pressed a stormy kiss upon her cheek.

"You're a perfect imp of mischief to-day," protested the girl.

"Not at all; I have a right to kiss my own Aunt. Can I help it if you're not twenty-one yet? But hear the rest. After the Professor had so heartily agreed with me, he added a few sentences out of his own head, which I feel I ought to hand on to you in letters of gold on finest vellum. He said, for instance: 'Fraulein Marie is an amiable and highly-gifted being, full of noble aspirations.' You see, that is because you took such a deep interest in his old Greek gods. But those gods are, naturally, not nearly so fascinating to you as he is himself——"

"Let me just——"

"Keep calm. That is my unprejudiced opinion. And I'll tell you another thing. The Professor's astonishing friendship for me is grounded simply on the fact that he has noticed what good friends you and I are——"

"You are doing him an injustice there. That would be a mean calculation."

"No, he does it unconsciously. I read in Molière lately that a lover is attracted even

to his lady's dog. And as I am a step higher, being your nephew——"

Marie was compelled to laugh, in spite of her vexation. Then she said gravely:

"I am afraid you have been very thoughtless. It was not right, Theodore."

"Why not? I wanted to be certain. It is because I am so tender-hearted; I can't bear to see two loving hearts pining away disconsolately. And, as I said, I did it with such diplomatic caution! Finally, I muttered mysteriously, half to myself, 'Yes, the man that Aunt Marie marries will be a lucky fellow!' He got quite pale, then—I assure you, he was as white as this batiste blouse you are wearing—and whispered almost despairingly through his clenched teeth, 'Doubtless!' He changed the subject at once, but the pallor of his good, honest face, and the miserable tone in his voice, didn't go away for a long time. I could see very well what he had in his mind. He pictured to himself a dazzling cavalier—perhaps Captain Scholl—leading you, radiant with happiness, to the altar. In short, all the signs clearly point to a certain fact, namely, the jury declare that Professor Lotichius is guilty of the crime of being hopelessly in love with Fraulein Marie Sanders."

Marie drew a deep breath.

"But, good gracious!" she exclaimed, raising her eyebrows; "I don't quite see what you mean by it all?"

"Don't you? Are you so dense? Well, as a future lawyer, I wanted to practise my noble calling in smoothing out the tangled skein, and making it all beautifully straight. It is plain that my words have stirred your youthful heart, and as you cannot possibly find a better, nobler, dearer fellow than the Professor, I will bore you with my advice—being a near relative—so that you may show him a little of your love to encourage him."

Marie gazed intently at the ground.

"I don't know what to think," said she, in shy embarrassment. "You, a half-grown boy, have interfered with things miles beyond

your mental horizon. Why don't you stick to your Sophocles?"

"But Sophocles talks of love, too! And I can't help it that my heart is so brimming over with admiring friendship and sympathy for you two people! There is something calling to me continually, 'Smooth the way for those two!' And just think—the Professor for an uncle, wouldn't that be a splendid achievement for the family!"

Marie suddenly drew her handkerchief out of her pocket, and began to cry.

"What's the matter, Auntie?"

"I'm—I'm—so ashamed to hear you talk like that!"

"Ah, I don't believe it! You're crying for joy because I've brought you such good news."

"Theodore," she began, after a pause, seizing his hand, "you really are older than your years—and, unfortunately, I'm not clever at pretending. As you say, you know it. Very well; I own that I do like Professor Lotichius. But I like my good name and womanly pride still more. You must give me your word of honour that you will never betray the slightest hint of what I have just told you—to anyone! That would seem—indeed, it would be a terrible thought! So give me your hand upon it; you will never again mention me to the Professor, and you will keep strict silence about the confession that you have wormed out of me. Promise me this, or something dreadful will certainly happen!"

Theodore stared in astonishment at her blazing eyes.

"Oh, very well," said he, hesitatingly, "since you really wish it; but, honestly, I don't see——"

"Your word of honour!"

"Yes, yes, my word of honour! You have it safe enough. But you must let me add one remark to your demand, and that is, I don't see at all how it could compromise you if he knew you liked him. I tell you, he's quite unique. He imagines himself to be the ugliest, most insignificant creature under the sun——"

"That can't be possible!"

"Oh, yes; he does! That's what makes him so terribly shy, so slow, so—how shall I put it? I bet you anything old Lotichius hasn't had half so much experience in love affairs as a boy in the sixth form! He certainly thinks it quite impossible that a beautiful, flattered, dainty creature like you can take the smallest interest in him personally. In his researches, perhaps, but not in himself. So I say it's quite right to lend him courage, somehow, to believe a thing which he would never dare to hope. I was reading lately about how the Italian poet, Anselmo Colombi, got his wife——"

"How was that?"



"YOUR WORD OF HONOUR!"

"Well, he was just such another bashful man. He had pined for months, but every time he had a chance of uttering the fateful word to his adored one, he was struck dumb. So, at last, when they were alone one day, the clever young girl who was to be the poet's wife, looked at him tenderly, and said 'Doctor, you want to marry me, don't you?' And, instantly, with a jubilant 'Yes!' Anselmo Colombi locked her in his arms!"

You see, that marriage, afterwards so happy, would never have taken place if the girl had rigidly declared: 'It is unwomanly to take the first step in such a matter.' There was really no question of a first step—he had done that silently, long before—but only of an unsealing word. Now, you know where you are! Good-bye, and just think over what you have to do! I'm not going to do anything against your wish. But whenever you feel that the meddling of a mischievous boy would be of use, then, dear Auntie, I shall always be ready."

He laughed, stroked her golden hair tenderly, and walked out through the garden—where chrysanthemums and asters made bright patches of colour under the fast-yellowing trees—and finally disappeared.

Marie Sanders picked up her book with an abstracted air. She could not read it now. It was quite true: she loved the clever, earnest, gentle Professor with the utter irresistibility of a first passion. And Theodore's news was indeed good news to her; until now she had always feared in her secret heart that her love was not returned. But the new situation, joy inspiring though it was, filled her with wild unrest. She felt that Theodore had divined the Professor's character only too well. That shy, timid man would never dare to put the all-important question without encouragement. And such encouragement, no matter in what form, she could not bring herself to give. The story of the poet Colombi haunted her. She recalled Theodore's words. No! Even all the ardour of her love could never, under any circumstances, induce her to forget her womanly delicacy. That was absolutely impossible!

CHAPTER II.

The learned counsel, Herr Merck, and Caroline, his wife—Theodore's parents—gave a small dinner-party on the twentieth anniversary of their wedding-day. Only their nearest relatives and a few old friends were invited, including Professor Lotichius, and

Captain Scholl, indisputably the most brilliant officer of the Glanstadt garrison. Theodore, who was on a footing of good-comradeship with his still youthful mother, managed to have a word to say upon the arrangement of the table; the natural consequence of which was that Professor Lotichius had the pleasure of taking in Marie Sanders. But, to Theodore's vexation, Captain Scholl was placed at the other side of the hostess's fair sister. Theodore's original intention was to put that smart cavalry officer out in the cold at the opposite end of the table, but his mother assured him that it would be discourteous in her to arrange her guests with so little regard for their feelings. On consideration, he thought the proximity of a rival might not damage his plans so effectually as he had feared. When the Professor saw how ardently the Captain devoted himself to Marie, it might perhaps drive away his bashfulness. Jealousy was certainly a mighty lever.

All went well. Kitchen and cellar offered of the best. A jovial old uncle gave the toast of the evening, praised the happy family life that Herr and Frau Merck had enjoyed for twenty years without a sorrow, made a few graceful allusions to the two promising young members of the household—Theodore and his fifteen-year-old sister Frieda, and finally wove the charming sister of the hostess into his discourse with many honeyed words. All the complimentary phrases referring to Marie were agreed to by Theodore with nods and smiles at his Aunt, who sat almost opposite him; while he kept a sharp watch upon the Professor. But the learned guest fixed his eyes upon the plate, and played with the stem of his champagne-glass with uncertain fingers.

His reverie was interrupted by a murmur of applause. With a slight blush, Professor Lotichius touched glasses with his fair neighbour. He spoke not a word, but turned hastily to perform the same time-honoured ceremony with his hosts and the other

guests. Captain Scholl, on the contrary, turned, with a winning smile under his heavy moustache, and whispered tenderly to Marie.

"I quite agree with him—especially in what he said of you! A fine man, that Uncle! Allow me, Fräulein Sanders." He drained the glass at a draught, and shot a fiery glance from his deep, dark eyes into her's.

Theodore saw, to his great annoyance, that his dear Professor's love-affair was not making the slightest progress. Yet when he impartially compared the two men sitting next his Aunt, there was no doubt in his mind as to which of them bore away the palm. Professor Lotichius was not only a man of kindly disposition, he was fine-looking, tall and stately, with handsome features. But want of self-confidence, the troubled shyness of a hermit-like nature, and a dreamy, absent-minded look, gave him an eccentric air. Captain Scholl, however, was nothing but a gay, experienced flirt, who could talk pleasantly, but was shallow and superficial, caring for little but his own amusement and comfort. If the Professor could once stand beside beautiful Marie Sanders as her life-long companion, all the eccentricities that now prejudiced certain people against him would entirely disappear, and his real, true character shine through victoriously. But the officer was, and would always be, a very ordinary man, not at all suited to a deep-souled wonderful maiden such as Marie Sanders.

Theodore wondered at himself for making these observations. Yet Marie was quite of his opinion. She had owned to him that she liked the Professor. And, rightly considered, her manner of speaking to the two gentlemen was a proof of this liking. When she talked to the Professor she seemed strangely embarrassed, but she laughed with Captain Scholl and listened to his smallest jokes with evident pleasure.

True, this pleasure might be misunderstood by Professor Lotichius. The possibility of such

an error angered the precocious student of human nature beyond measure. And the Professor grew more and more silent, while Theodore Merck resolved to give a helping hand to his old friend's heart-romance as soon as an opportunity offered.

The boy's anxiety to put matters right did not prevent his enjoyment of the good things before him. As he took a handful of filberts the thought struck him that Marie must eat a philopena with the Professor. If old Lotichius could be placed in such a position that he would be obliged to present something to the object of his affection, a link would be formed which might be utilised by a clever schemer. It would be still better if the Professor won. Then Marie would have to work something for him, something very pretty, useful, and thoughtfully chosen; and Theodore would take care that the gift expressed the thoughts of the giver, as far as possible. That was the point upon which the whole case hung; Lotichius must certainly read what was in Marie's mind.

Theodore chuckled inwardly, as his mischievous brain wove this elaborate plot. On cracking the third nut, he found what he wished. He laid the two kernels on a plate, and handed them across the table, saying, "For you, Auntie, and your partner, Professor Lotichius. Will you have it?"

"Ah, a philopena," laughed Captain Scholl, with a significant air, twirling the long ends of his moustache. "So the good old custom has not died out?"

"If Professor Lotichius is willing," said Marie. She feared to give offence if she did not at once adopt Theodore's idea.

"Of course," agreed Lotichius, reddening. "But I must confess my ignorance. I have had very little experience in this sort of thing."

"It's quite simple." Marie briefly explained the usual conditions. He nodded. They then ate the kernels with comic solemnity.

"Intentional forgetfulness is forbidden," Theodore hastened to add, in his character of impartial witness; "isn't it, Auntie?"

"Why, yes, or else there would be no fun in it."

"Then take care, Professor!" warned Captain Scholl.

"Oh, no fear! I shall take great care."

And it certainly seemed that all his thoughts were centred, from that moment, upon gaining the victory in the mimic feud. He was more silent than ever; only the words, "I think of it," fell several times from his smiling lips.

Just before they rose from table, Marie's dinner-napkin happened to fall to the floor. Lotichius, full of cunning wile, stooped and handed it with a graceful bow to his unthinking neighbour. Marie was so overwhelmed with surprise at this movement on the part of the absent-minded Professor, that she forgot to repeat the magic words, and was only made aware of that fact on hearing him say with triumph, "Good morning, Philopena!"

"Bravo!" laughed the irrepressible Theodore, overjoyed.

But Marie was crimson with vexation and embarrassment, fearing that, in spite of her recently-expressed principles, her neglect to utter the magic phrase might be thought intentional. She stammered a few words of excuse for her inattention, and broke off abruptly.

The Professor was unusually stirred during the rest of the evening. He talked to Theodore in an especially lively and interesting manner, telling him of his recent journey through Greece, and confiding to him several important pieces of news. In his humility, he rejoiced over his tiny victory as if it had been a serious matter. The hope of claiming Marie Sanders as his own lay further off than ever, especially as he was firmly convinced that Captain Scholl was in dead earnest. To compete with such a rival would be the wildest folly. In his inmost heart Lotichius had sorrowingly renounced her. It would be happiness enough for him if he could only carry with him to Bonn a little keepsake from her. For he was now in communication with the University authorities in that city.

He had hesitated about accepting their invitation, but here he suddenly decided; yes, he would take the post. It was this instant resolve which gave him such an alert, vivacious air, so that he seemed almost brilliant.

After coffee, the whole assembly made their way into the garden. The sun was just setting. Over the trees, bushes, and flower-beds lay the saddening charm of the fleeting summer. Theodore planned and plotted so skilfully that the Professor unexpectedly found himself alone in the arbour with Marie. She hastily began a conversation on some safe subject — she knew not what — when he announced that he was leaving for Bonn early in November, if not before. A larger field of work would be open to him there than in Glaustadt. As she did not answer, he added, half to himself:

"Yes, *Fräulein Sanders*, I am certainly improving my position, and I hope to forget some emotions and foolish dreams sooner there than here. It is not given to every man to realise his golden visions on earth, as it is to some favoured ones, such as Captain Scholl."

He was silent, astonished at his own audacity; he had never meant to utter those wild words in his whole life. Marie's heart beat tumultuously. But before she could answer, the very man who had just been so strangely mentioned walked into the arbour, and, with an air of tender homage, handed her "the last rose of summer," which he had just plucked for her in the "*La France*" rose-bed.

CHAPTER III.

Marie was very busy for the next week or two working at her present. Large pocket-books of bead embroidery were then much in fashion; and as a pocket-book seemed to her an especially suitable gift to a learned man, she had gone the very next morning to the principal fancy shop in Glaustadt to choose

something very dainty and uncommon for the man of her heart.

The weather had turned dull and cold; but there was the sunshine and joy of a glorious May morning in Marie's heart. For, after much anxious deliberation, she had hit upon a plan. The words spoken by the Professor in the honeysuckle arbour were, indeed, almost equivalent to a declaration of love. In shyness and embarrassment he really was a little like the Italian poet: he must be helped, however difficult it might be to break through the old strict traditions of womanly reticence. If Captain Scholl had not come in, who knows whether everything would not have been settled straight off? The circumstances were so favourable, and the lover's voice so full of emotion! But that thrilling moment was irretrievably lost, and nothing remained but to act before it was too late.

Throughout whole afternoons did Marie sit in her pretty room and work till her eyes ached. She had bought the tiniest beads that were made for the purpose, and a very elaborate, difficult pattern: but when the work was finished it would look very quaint and pretty. Slender pale-green forget-me-not sprays, with their starry blue flowers and faint pink buds, stood out from a background of veiled landscape. The design could only be fully seen when held at a little distance, but it would be plainer in the beads. And in any case the general appearance would be that of a wonderful, harmonious mosaic of glittering colour. On the other side there was a scroll of beads with the shining inscription, "Good morning, Philopena!" thereon, and under it the date of the event. The pains taken to produce so beautiful a specimen of fine work must show the dear one that the worker had wrought her own yearning soul into it. Such a gift was only made for the one being for whom every fibre of the heart throbbed. And then——

A flaming red flush dyed her cheek as she came to this "Then" in her wild imaginings. She shrank from it for a moment, but only for a moment. She knew very well that there

was no other way for her but to claim Theodore's friendly offer of help. And yet she was ashamed to do that: it would be a hundred times more painful, more humiliating. No, she could not, under any circumstances!

Theodore, who was extremely interested in the pocket-book, watched her rapid progress with great satisfaction. But he was surprised that the Professor, who had been a constant visitor to the house, had not called or sent any message for so long.

"What's up with old Lotichius?" he asked, flinging himself on to the sofa beside his aunt, while the girl, bending over her



FULL OF CUNNING WILE.

embroidery-frame, went on threading bead after bead. "Why doesn't he come here any more?"

"Who knows?" said Marie.

Theodore drummed on the table.

"Very mysterious!" he went on, with a shrug of his shoulders. "He always used to drop in on his way to college, but now it seems as if he goes out of his way so as not to call."

"I suppose he has his reasons," replied Marie, calmly.

She went on working, while the boy looked frowningly out of the window. The Professor's absence caused her no anxiety. She knew the error into which he had fallen, and knew how soon this error would be explained. She had her plan. How strange it was of Professor Lotichius to connect her with Captain Scholl, who was so utterly indifferent to her! Oh, to think that the dearest and cleverest of men could not read her heart, when so much depended upon it! But patience! She had her little plan.

A few days later Theodore, on knocking at the door of his Aunt's room, was surprised to find it bolted on the inside. The girl called out, startled:

"Who's there? Is it you, Theodore? I can't open the door, I'm dressing!"

"So late as this?"

"Yes. Come in half-an-hour; I want to ask you something."

Marie's remark about dressing was a small fiction, invented on the spur of the moment. She was sitting in complete indoor toilette before a small spiral-legged table copying a letter, to compose which had taxed her skill to the utmost. It was addressed to Professor Lotichius, and contained, though not a direct avowal of her preference for him, yet such turns of expression that he would no longer be left in ignorance of the real state of the case. She particularly wished to set him right on the subject of Captain Scholl, adding that she "was most anxious that Professor Lotichius should not deceive himself in this matter." He must surely see, on reading this, that his wooing would be favourably received, and rewarded with the love of a lifetime. And yet Marie had conveyed her meaning so skilfully as to deprive it of any suspicion of unwomanliness, making it rather seem an involuntary self-betrayal than an admission made of set purpose.

When she had carefully copied the letter,

she put it into a tiny envelope, sealed it, and hid it deep in the innermost fold of the newly-finished pocket-book.

"There! I'll try Signora Anselmo Colombi's way!" she thought, laughing. "So, good luck to it! It was the only thing I could do!"

When the half-hour was ended, Theodore came again.

"You have made yourself extra beautiful to-day," said he, glancing at her light alpaca gown. It was not really the gown at all which called forth this exclamation, but an indescribable touch of shy happiness which lay upon the girl's face like a rosy dawn.

"Theodore," she began, hesitatingly, "the pocket-book is finished. Will you do me the great favour of taking it to the Professor himself at his house?"

"Willingly! What wouldn't I do for my beautiful Aunt? But let me see how it looks!"

He seized it. Marie protested anxiously.

"Don't take hold of it like that! The pale grey leather soils so easily."

"Oh, well!" laughed Theodore. "But I'm not a child, running about with sticky, jammy fingers! Anything to please you, however, I'll respect the sacred thing. Show it me yourself, and I will gaze at it from a distance."

Marie pushed the pocket-book towards him. She had laid it upon pink tissue-paper, and really seemed half afraid to handle it herself.

"Splendid!" said the boy. "And what fine, delicate work! Well, if our Professor doesn't suspect something now——"

"So you don't think my present too worthless?"

"Just listen to her! Worthless! It's a tip-top sort of treasure, that's what it is!"

"I am glad you think so. Light a taper for me, will you?"

"Oh, you're going to seal it?"

"Why, yes, it's usual, isn't it?"

She wrapped the gift in the soft pink covering, and put it into a large envelope,

sealed it in several places, and wrote in the left-hand bottom corner :

"From M. Sanders."

Charged with the little packet, Theodore wended his way to the house of his learned friend. As Professor Lotichius was out, the maid took the packet, promising to deliver it safely. That same evening an envelope arrived, containing nothing, however, but the Professor's visiting-card, with these words under the name :

"Sincere thanks for the very pretty Philopena."

Then a week slipped by without further sign or word from Professor Lotichius.

On the ninth day he appeared at the formal visiting-hour (eleven a.m.), clad in a black frock-coat, to take leave of the Merck family. He was to leave for Bonn some weeks sooner than he had expected. He thanked Fräü Merck—her husband was away on a journey—in a stammering speech for the warm welcome he had always received at her house, and begged to be allowed to offer a small Grecian stone to her and her sister as a slight souvenir. Then he drew two little olive-wood caskets out of his pocket, each containing a jewel lying on a bed of pale-blue cotton-wool, laid them half-open upon the table, and left the rest to the ladies.

Marie, who had alternated incessantly between hope and despair ever since she had sent the pocket-book, thought that the Professor's strangely-reserved manner could no longer be mistaken. While Fräü Merck was admiring the jewels, and expressing her deepest regret at the departure of such a highly-esteemed friend, Marie recalled to memory every word of her letter with feverish anxiety. Yet, though she criticised it severely, she felt that it contained nothing that could wound the most delicate sensibilities of a man who loved her. There was, therefore, but one conclusion possible: she and Theodore had utterly mistaken the Professor's feelings for her. He did not love her, had not understood her motive, and

must have thought her epistle a piece of the most unwarrantable boldness!

She had great difficulty in preserving a calm appearance during the quarter-of-an-hour that the visit lasted. When Professor Lotichius at length took leave of her with a sorrowful look—a look in which she read the involuntary expression of his grief at having so entirely erred in his estimate of her character—she hastened to her room, threw herself, face downwards, upon the bed, and wept despairingly. Perhaps her bitterest pang at that moment was caused by the feeling that she could not confide her troubles to a single creature upon God's earth. Even Theodore, who knew so much of her inner soul, must never know of that letter. Oh, how she hated, in her utter misery, the boy who had told her the idiotic story of Anselmo Colombi's courtship! Her first instinct had been the right one, after all! Every unwomanly action, however skilfully disguised, bore its own punishment. Without that horrible letter, her life would have been empty and poor, no doubt, but not bruised to its core! It seemed as if she had now lost every support, all capability of dragging on her wretched existence. Not only had love failed her, but she suffered the torment of having lost the esteem of the one and only man whose esteem was worth having.

And she wept, wept, until she lost consciousness of her misery in heavy sleep.

CHAPTER IV.

Forty years have gone over the land. Marie Sanders had remained single, so had Professor Lotichius, who had shut himself up more and more from the world and buried himself deep in his archæological researches: only one link with his old life was unbroken—his friendship with Theodore. Three decades ago, Theodore had settled in Glaustadt as a lawyer, had married a pretty, amiable girl, and, a few years later, had found his practice, already a good one, much widened by the all-too-early death of his

beloved father. He lived in a beautiful, spacious house, near the northern gate, where his mother—as companionable and pleasant with her daughter-in-law as she had been with her school-boy son—had also found a tranquil, restful home. But Aunt Marie had gone away soon after the Professor's departure, to travel with a distant relative as companion, and afterwards, to satisfy her restless craving for occupation, she had accepted the position of superintendent of a servants' home. She wrote but seldom, and when she did, a strange melancholy breathed through her letters, which seemed out of keeping with the evident joy of her devotion to her work. Theodore had never again mentioned the Professor's love affair. He had always felt rather ashamed about it. Of course, if the Professor would not, no one could force him; and there certainly were some odd people who could never make up their minds to any change of that kind, in spite of their hankerings and longings; being, perhaps, predestined to eternal celibacy. In any case, he considered it his duty, having meddled with the matter, to preserve an unbroken silence upon it.

As Theodore—whose hair and beard were now liberally sprinkled with grey—was sitting one morning drinking his early coffee, and discussing with his good old mother the escapades of his eldest son, a letter was brought in. It bore the Bonn post-mark, but was not addressed in Professor Lotichius' handwriting. Herr Lorenz, who had been his amanuensis for many years, therein announced the sad news of his dear master's very sudden death of a brain affection. Knowing that Herr Theodore Merck was one of the late Professor's most intimate friends, he had thought it his duty to write at once, especially as he had learnt from his master years ago that Herr Theodore Merck was residing legatee under the will.

Theodore was moved to the depths of his soul. He sent a telegram thanking the

amanuensis, but saying that he was unfortunately not able to come to the funeral. He also despatched a beautiful wreath of ivy, laurel, and other evergreens.

A week later Theodore went to Bonn to arrange the affairs of his dead friend. He knew Lotichius had never been a rich man; scarcely comfortably off, indeed. All his possessions, including furniture, could not amount to very much. His literary accumulations, too, were rather of technical than material value. Theodore resolved to entrust the examination and arrangement of the archaeological collections to a learned young friend of his own, unless Lotichius had otherwise disposed of them. He would take one or two pieces of furniture to keep in memory of his friend, give some to Lorenz, and sell the rest by auction.

Full of sorrow, he entered the great savant's study, and began his sad task of tying up, docketting, and making a list of the Professor's papers, which were neatly arranged in the drawers of the writing-table.

He also found a mass of notes, extracts, and treatises, all preparations for the great work, "Greek Plastic Art," with which Lotichius had been busy for some years. There were, besides, five or six monographs, some almost complete, needing only a few final touches, others merely sketched out in a few clear, acute, original headings, which the master, in his devotion to his great work, had never found time to finish. In the left-hand top drawer, in rather hopeless confusion, lay the correspondence of many years; chiefly letters from former colleagues or fellow students, with here and there a friendly or family letter among them. Theodore took these letters out in a mass, tied them up, and gave them to the amanuensis to pack. He would examine them at home at his leisure, would see if any of the yellow documents were worth keeping, and burn the rest. He had neither time or courage for such an undertaking here in Bonn.

When he had disposed of all the letters, he found at the back of the drawer a brown-

paper parcel about as long as his hand. He opened it carefully. It was full of thin, almost unsightly, notebooks. He opened the top one, and saw, in the Professor's firm, clear handwriting, "Notes of my journey in Greece." On the cover of the second was "Studies in Pompeii"; on the third, "Receipts and expenditure."

And then all at once Theodore felt himself back in the old schooldays; that happy time when Professor Lotichius was a constant visitor at his parents' house. He saw himself once more in the honeysuckle arbour, sitting beside his beautiful young Aunt, and then up in her pretty room, where, with cheeks glowing with happiness, she bent over her embroidery frame. For there, under the "Receipts and Expenditure" of the departed archæologist, lay the pocket-book that Aunt Marie had given him as a philopena present forty years ago!

Theodore recognised the rare head-picture in an instant—the picture that he had watched with so much interest, as it grew under Aunt Marie's slender fingers; here it lay, exactly as he remembered it. There were the pale-green forget-me-not stalks, with their blue stars and pink buds, and the wonderful landscape mosaic in the background. And, on turning it over, there, as additional proof, was the scroll he knew so well, with day and date as fresh as when they were lovingly inscribed. What fine, careful work it was! What pains Aunt Marie had taken, and how pretty it was when it was done! Even now he could not help admiring it, in spite of its old-fashioned air: the pretty heads had lost nothing of their brilliancy. Only the general effect was so quaint, so ancient.

Sadly meditating upon the flight of time, Theodore Merck turned the pocket-book round between his fingers. It was a strange thing that these two people should have gone on their lonely way through life without mutual life and sympathy. As Theodore looked back over the incidents of that happy far-off time, he felt that he had been right, after all. The man of ripened years owned in

his heart that the boy's opinion was right: Professor Lotichius had been stirred to the depths of his soul by the pure charm of Marie's presence. He had truly loved her. And yet he had gone away from Glaustadt without a word of explanation, and had been silent through all these years, while Marie's wounded heart had withdrawn further and further into itself, and finally all life had withered out of it.

The now elderly lady had long since won the restful peace of a contented mind. Silently and bravely had she gone on her solitary, unlighted way, and had found tranquillity in it.



SHE UNFOLDED THE PAPER WRAPPINGS.

Then the thought struck him: "This pocket-book must go to Aunt Marie; it may be a kind of satisfaction to her when I tell her how carefully our dear lost friend had preserved her gift, and how he had laid it, as if for her, here, between the precious notebooks of his Greek tour.

He opened the old-fashioned keepsake to see whether the dainty leaves, tied in with a

pink ribbon, contained anything of importance. But all was untouched; he could not find the faintest pencilling upon the white pages, as he turned them over one by one. So he carefully folded it up again in its tissue-paper wrappings, and put it in his pocket.

CHAPTER V.

On the fourteenth of March, Marie Sanders received a packet with the Bonn post-mark, accompanied by an affectionate letter from her nephew Theodore. After the usual loving greetings and inquiries as to her welfare, he went on to say that he enclosed as a sorrowful, beautiful souvenir of Professor Lotichius, the bead-embroidered pocket-book of long ago. . . . Aunt Marie would remember it well. . . . And Theodore trusted it would give her a little pleasure to see, by the perfect condition in which the pocket-book had been found, how highly the Professor had esteemed her gift.

Marie Saunders was now sixty-one years old. The once golden hair was of snowy whiteness, the noble face still bore a dim resemblance to that of the girl of twenty, especially the brow and eyes. On her pleasant features lay nothing old-maidish, sour, or peevish; only a faint touch of autumnal sadness, the lone dirge of a late October day, when storms are stilled, and the golden leaves rustle softly in the deepening twilight mist. Her benevolent mouth had an expression of truly maternal gentleness.

A strange convulsive movement passed over her countenance as she read her nephew's letter. What she had suffered in that far-away time—the pain of wounded pride, the deep, secret sorrow of a wasted love—had long since been forgotten. Only kindness and affection seemed to have remained in her faithful memory. At the mention of her little present, it was as if she had got back a living portion of her buried youth. All the dazzling dreams that she had spun during that period of hope and

expectation, down to the dull agony of parting with the man she loved, rose afresh in her shivering soul in their full brilliancy, without the bitter after-taste of the awakening. The dawn of a first and only love threw a warm, transforming ray over the long-frozen being of this solitary being.

With trembling hands she unfolded the paper wrappings. At the sight of the unforgotten embroidery, two sparkling tears welled forth, and hung from her eyelashes. She pressed the shining beads to her mouth as fervently as ever a believer kissed a sacred reliquary. Then, overwhelmed by an indescribable emotion, she gazed once more upon the blossoming forget-me-not sprays, with the half-veiled landscape behind them, until they swam before her eyes, and she wept without knowing it.

At length she wiped her streaming face, and buried her burning eyelids in her handkerchief, while deep sobs shook her trembling form.

What a strange being she was! She had been comparatively unmoved on hearing of his death. She had scarcely ever heard him spoken of during all these years, for Theodore had always avoided mentioning him, and she could not trust herself to ask about him. There had been nothing terrible in his death to her. She had even found a certain satisfaction in the thought that his useful life had ended suddenly, without any of the sorrows or infirmities of old age; and thus she had soon become reconciled to his loss. But now, when the sight of her little gift had brought back the dreams of her youth, she could not bear the tumultuous rush of sweet memories.

Slowly and timidly she began to turn over the white leaves that she had tied in so many years ago, and was astonished to find them all unused. A fresh pang shot through her heart. He had cared so little for her, then, that he would not even use the pages she had so lovingly prepared for him! The interpretation that Theodore had put upon this fact—seeing in it a special honour, a sort of holy reverence—never crossed her mind. Unused!

simply put aside! But no; here on the last page was a dim pencil memorandum. She bent over it; and as she read, her face grew deadly pale; her hands trembled so violently that she was obliged to stop more than once to summon all her self-control.

"This pocket-book was given to me as a philopena by Fräulein Marie Sanders shortly before my departure from Glaustadt. Woe is me that ever I met that incomparable maiden! I love her to madness; and yet I shall soon have to bear the knowledge that she is the wife of another. How could I—fool that I was!—hope for one single moment that she, so admired, so brilliant, so perfectly beautiful, could ever stoop to the dull, clumsy bookworm! She shows me a friendly interest, perhaps pity, but nothing more. With this gift I bury all my hopes. I will guard it in my keeping as a precious jewel. After my death Marie shall learn from this page—if she ever sees it—what she was to a comfortless, lonely man during that happy time at Glaustadt.

"EDWIN LOTICHIOUS."

A despairing moan escaped her lips. So Theodore had read more deeply than she? It had not all been a mistake, then? But if he had really loved her, how had it been possible?

Involuntarily, her trembled fingers searched the fold in which she had once hidden her letter to Professor Lotichius. An icy shudder ran through her whole being, and she sank back, helpless, in her arm-chair.

For her letter was still there—untouched—unopened.

The shock was too cruel. Marie Sanders lost consciousness.

CHAPTER VI.

WHEN she opened her eyes again she saw Theodore standing at her bedside. Yet it was not the grizzled, middle-aged lawyer, but the beaming, handsome, mischievous school-boy. And this was the pretty, dainty, girlish room in her sister's house, not the lonely chamber of the white-haired old maid. Marie had dreamt it—all—all—

She wanted to cry out "Heaven be praised!" But she soon remembered that the principal event was reality after all. Professor Lotichius had said "good-bye" to her to-day: he would be on his way to Bonn very early to-morrow morning. Not one word had he sent her in answer to letter. So her life was wasted—lost. And now she wept afresh.

"Auntie, do be reasonable!" whispered Theodore, taking her hand. "You will have to go down to dinner in twenty minutes. What will mother think?"



A TRIUMPHANT HERO.

"Oh, Theodore, Theodore!" she sobbed "I have had such a horrible dream! The weight of it oppresses me like a dreadful crime"

And, driven by the burning need of opening her wounded heart to a fellow-creature, she told him her dream, and the secret of the hidden letter.

Theodore's eyes sparkled.

"It is the finger of Fate! I am quite sure your dream is true, except the end of the story. You would not let your clumsy

nephew meddle before ; but I beg you not to forbid me now, for all our sakes !”

With that he was gone. He had no need to invent an excuse. He had not yet paid his farewell visit to the Professor, and he certainly must perform that duty to his old friend.

“How did you like the pocket-book?” he asked, after a time. “I mean the one Aunt Marie gave you.”

“Oh, very much ; it is exquisitely done !”

“I think there’s a dedication inside it.”

“Indeed? A dedication? Then I must have another look.”

So it was really as Auntie had dreamt! Her letter still lay unopened in the inner fold! And hence the unending misery of two passionately loving hearts!

Oh, these learned men!

Theodore hastened home, leaving the Professor to his happy lot.

Soon afterwards came a thrilling, passionate, imploring letter.

And later in the evening, the Professor himself appeared, quite transformed in mien and bearing : a stormer of hearts, a conqueror, a triumphant hero!

Early in December, in the room where Professor Lotichius and Marie Sanders had eaten the memorable philopena together, the wedding-feast was spread. Theodore composed a stirring epithalamium for the occasion, in which there were certain allusions to Anselmo Colombi, only understood by the young poet and the bride. But later, when she was alone with her husband, she made a sort of general confession—her heart beating with wild accompaniment—in which she told him the whole story. He rejoiced to find that he had such a celebrated companion in his stupidity, for otherwise he would have considered himself the dullest dolt in Europe ; an opinion which would have been quite out of place for a man holding the high office of Professor of Archaeology at the famous University of Bonn-on-the-Rhine.

Translated by M. J. ROBERTSON.

THE HOME OF THE CHAMPION.

MANY of the “Stately Homes of England” have historical environment which is quite apart from the lives of their owners. Perhaps a fugitive king or queen, or some fair pursued princess, sheltered a night beneath its roof ; or a national rebellion had its tiny rushlight kindled into a fierce flame in one of the oak-panelled rooms. But between Scrivelsby Court and the family of Dymoke there has been no disassociation, the King’s Champion and his home being inseparable facts in the annals of our country. In the early Norman days, when lands were assigned to anyone, some particular service was imposed upon the holder as a condition of the possession ; and thus when William the Conqueror won the Battle of Hastings he appropriated many Saxon homes, and gave them to his followers. Amongst others who were thus ousted was the Lord of Scrivelsby Manor, and in his place the King installed his favourite Robert Marmion, the Champion. The Marmions were a powerful Norman family, descended, like William himself, from Rollo, the “Ganger.” The office of Champion, thus transplanted from France to England, continued in the house of Marmion until the reign of Henry III., when the last of them—the famous warrior, Sir Philip—died, leaving four co-heiresses in his daughters. To one of these—Joan—fell Scrivelsby and the Lincolnshire estates, and her daughter, Margaret Ludlow, became the wife of Sir John Dymoke, and ancestress of the family who for more than five centuries have lived at Scrivelsby. The present holder of the Championship, Mr. Francis Dymoke, directly traces his descent through this Margaret Ludlow to the great Sir Robert Marmion, the Conqueror’s favourite. The co-heiress with Joan, who inherited the other property of Sir Philip’s—Tamworth Castle, in Leicestershire—had heirs, who frequently disputed with those at Scrivelsby as to the rights of the



A PEEP INTO SCRIVELSBY COURT.



THE PRESENT CHAMPION.

Championship; these disputes being, however, settled in Court prior to the coronation of Richard II., when the Dymokes were declared the rightful holders of the office by virtue of the possession of Scrivelsby.

Since then, and until the time of George IV., no coronation ceremony was deemed complete without this most picturesque ceremony, and the Champions have ever been Dymokes of Scrivelsby. Until the days of Charles I. the Championship continued in unbroken descent from father to son, some of them undergoing extraordinary vicissitudes, in the case of one Sir Thomas, who lived in the time of Edward IV. resulting in decapitation, because of his Lancastrian sympathies. Sir Edward Dymoke, the grandson of the luckless Sir Thomas, had the honour of being Champion to Queen Mary, the first woman who numbered such a personage amongst her officers. He pronounced the following challenge right gallantly as he bestrode his beautiful charger in Westminster Hall:

"If there be any manner of man, of whatever estate, degree, or condition soever he be, that will say and maintain that our Sovereign Lady, Queen Mary the First, this day here present, is not the rightful and undoubted inheritrix to the Imperial Crown of this realm of England, and that of right she ought not to be crowned Queen, I say he lieth like a false traitor, and that I am ready the same to maintain with him while I have breath in my body, either now at this time or any other, whensoever it shall please the Queen's Highness to appoint, and therefore I cast him my gage."

"If ever," says Miss Strickland, "there was danger of a Champion being called upon to prove his words, it was at this coronation of Mary." But all passed off well, and Her Majesty drank to Sir Edward, and sent him the gold cup as part of his fee. *Apropos* of this coronation, an interesting letter was written by Sir Edward to Sir William Cecil, reproaching him for making him sue out a warrant from the Queen for his perquisites.



THE FUTURE CHAMPION.

At King Edward's coronation, he goes on to say, they were delivered to his father without warrant. "And by the precedents of my claim I ought to have them now. It is the Queen's pleasure that I should have all things pertaining to my office, and so she willed me to declare to my Lord Treasurer; and rather than I would be driven to sue a warrant for such small things I would lose them."

"Small things?" Sir Edward had indeed a disdainful idea of the Champion's perquisites, for when we remember that these included a gold cup and cover, the second best suit of armour in the King's Armoury, the second best horse in the Royal Mews, and twenty yards of crimson satin* wherewith to adorn his knightly person, but which probably was frequently appropriated by the Dymoke dames and demoiselles, they were certainly worth having.

The fate of Robert Dymoke, the Champion of Queen Elizabeth, was indeed a sad one, as he was suspected of hankering after Rome. He was interviewed at Scrivelshy by the Puritanical Bishop of Lincoln, who, failing to shake the strong religious faith of the Champion, had him forcibly, and in very bad health, conveyed to Lincoln and imprisoned, death, however, speedily liberating him, and entitling him to be venerated as a martyr in the Romish Church.

In the disturbed days of the Civil War the Dymokes suffered much from their loyalty, and the owners of Scrivelshy, like many others of the gentry, began to undergo

pecuniary embarrassment, the result of many a service rendered their king. Indeed, Charles Dymoke, who was Champion to Charles I., and himself a very prominent cavalier, bequeathed a sum of £2,000 to his Royal namesake at his death for the relief of his necessities. This same Charles dying a bachelor, a break in the succession occurred, and the family was subsequently divided into the Tetford and the Scrivelshy branches. With these, however, we have nothing to do, save, perhaps, to note that the present Master of Scrivelshy belongs to the former. It is rather with the home of the Champion than with the Champions themselves that the present article is concerned.

The very arcadian village of Scrivelshy lies about two-and-a-half miles south of Horn-castle. Before the advent of William the Conqueror it was included with fourteen other villages in a soke, or soc, of Horncastle, this soke ensuring special jurisdictions and certain rights. Soon after the Marmions had settled at Scrivelshy it was declared to be outside this pale, at least, these most



THE LION GATEWAY.

* The claim of the satin was disallowed at Queen Anne's Coronation.



SCRIVELSBY COURT FROM THE PARK.

powerful lords thought it best to consider it so, as they could not bear the restraint imposed by the soke. The family mansion of the Dymokes stands in a small but well-wooded park, which originally was much larger; the trees are, of course, very old, and they at least look as though they could, from out their hoary memory, unfold many a tale of the men and women who lived and died in this quiet Lincolnshire spot.

The entrance to the court is through the curious "lion gateway," built by Sir Robert, the Martyr Champion of the Sixteenth Century, and opposite to which are the stocks; for, in the days of its glory, the all-powerful Lords of Scrivelsby had culprits brought to the demesne for punishment, the stocks having as forerunners the pillory, and even the gallows itself. To the south of the house there are two short avenues, the one of chestnuts and beech trees being specially beautiful as seen from the windows. The leaden cow which stands at the end of this is now very dilapidated, but when it was first put there in place of some of the real animals, it was so natural that many were cheated into believing it genuine. It shows how much the Champion of that time was in need of funds, when he had to sell his cattle and put up a bogie cow in his ancestral grounds.

In the immediate front of the house there is a quaint old arched gateway, surmounted by a tower, from which watch could be kept, and unwelcome visitors greeted with whatever weapons were in vogue. Possibly this was defended by a portcullis and a drawbridge, and the whole building was surrounded by a moat. Now the gateway is

used as a clock-tower, and, alas! the moat is represented by a sheet of ornamental water, stocked with gold fish, whilst the charming old pleasance, where the Champions' fair ladies were wont to take their recreation, is converted into a neat modern garden.

Inside the house, also, many changes have been made, fire being responsible for much of the Vandalism which has taken place. Twice has the home of the Champions been in flames, once in the seventeenth century, and again in 1761, when John Dymoke was in London preparing for the coronation of George the Third. This time great mischief was done to the interior, the splendid old hall, whose walls were embellished with beautiful panels, on which the various arms and alliances of the family from their earliest days were depicted, was entirely destroyed, together with many valuable pictures, armour, &c.

The greatest interest naturally centres in the armoury, which is situated to the right of the chief entrance. Here we feel the spirit of the Champions' office, for everything in it is suggestive of the warrior and of defence. There are two armed figures, which stand there silent sentinels over a valuable collection of antique arms, swords, maces, old guns, pikes, daggers, and lances, with an occasional halberd, all of which have been

used by some bygone Champion. The light is softly filtered through small windows into the armoury, and sometimes a shaft of sunlight brings into vivid relief the point of a lance or the burnished top of a helmet.

Some very valuable suits of armour, worn by the most prominent Dymokes, have, unfortunately, been sold, one of them fetching £1,000. This was said to have belonged to an officer in Queen Elizabeth's Guard.

The old banqueting hall, which was a very characteristic apartment, was burnt down, and on its site the present Mrs. Dymoke has her own pretty boudoir. It commands a lovely view of the park, and is a most charming room.

The dining-room is chiefly noticeable for its family portraits, several of which are by the great masters.

One of the most valuable possessions at Scrivelshy are the Coronation Cups, the only remnants of kingly munificence. There are seven of these, for although there were twenty-one coronations in all, some members of the Dymoke family assisting at two and even three successive ones, reduced the number of acting Champions to fourteen, and possibly the number of cups also, as one of these massive "fees," as they were called, may have been thought sufficient for two ceremonials. Those cups which remain were given by James II., William and Mary, and the four Georges. When, in 1875, Henry Lionel Dymoke died, he left them by special bequest to Her Majesty, but she preferred to make them over as a gift from herself to the father of the present

owner, doubtless feeling that they belonged to the interesting home of the Champions who had won them, and were more fittingly kept there than at Windsor Castle.

Architecturally, both inside and out, the court is a very irregular structure, but the appearance of the latter is very imposing, and the many quaint ins and outs of stairway and corridor render the former most picturesque. It is eminently a home full of the charm of past memories, and replete with the comforts of a modern dwelling. Upstairs there are rooms which tradition ascribes now to one, now to another famous



GARDEN GATE.



A Wilson.

THE STOCKS.

member of the family, and one bedstead is always looked upon as having been honoured as the resting place of Queen Elizabeth during a brief sojourn at Scrivelsby.

The church of St. Benedict's, which is situated near the Dymoke residence, has naturally had as patrons some of the famous Champions, and it preserves amongst its treasures many monuments and treasures in connection with the family. Two stone effigies in one of the aisles are supposed to represent Sir Philip Marmion and his dame. The lady wears her wimple and the knight his armour, and although the figures are somewhat dilapidated, they are sufficiently preserved to give some idea of those whom they impersonate. A very quaint old brass records that—

Sr. Charles Dymoke is buried within the Communion rails, close to the south wall.

Lady Dymoke next to him.

Captain Dymoke next to the Lady.

The late Champion by the north wall.

Mme. Frances next to Him.

This was found originally at the Court, but it was afterwards removed, and placed on the north wall of the vestry. With so many traditions behind it, the Court would indeed be an ungrateful homestead if it did not shelter some ghost, and I am glad, in the interests of the woman's cause, to state that it is a lady who wanders through the rooms and up and down the stairs at Scrivelsby. She has the good taste, too, to rustle in silk, thereby proving herself in sympathy with this luxury-loving century. It is difficult to know to which period this fair *revenante* belongs; probably to that of the Martyr Champion, when troubles were so rife in the family; or does she come as a reminder of the unhappy times when the Dymokes impoverished themselves to enrich their King? She may have been a simple Puritan maiden, beloved by a loyal Champion's son, or it may be she was herself some

Courtly lady who came over with Henrietta Maria, and thrust her pretty neck into the tightening political noose under the guidance of a gallant of Scrivelsby. Whoever she may be, we may depend upon it she is a lady of ancient lineage. Nothing new would seem to be in keeping with this home of many knights, save, perhaps, the little son and heir of the present Champion, who might one day be called upon to act for Prince Edward of York. The ceremony is such a particularly graceful one, the very fact of challenging the world on behalf of a king or queen seems so utterly unnecessary from the stand-point of loyalty that it must needs be classed amongst the acts of romantic chivalry, but even as such it is a feature we can ill afford to erase from the coronation festival. How much it would

have added to the pictorial charm of our own Gracious Queen's enthronement could the Sire of Scrivelsby have performed his knightly duties, and made such a proclamation as Sir Edward, his ancestor, did when Queen Elizabeth was crowned, in which he asked for "The right to defend the most high and mighty princess, our dread Sovereign Lady Elizabeth by the grace of God, Queen of England, France, Ireland, defender of the true, ancient, and Catholic faith, most worthy Empress from the Orcade Isles to the Mountains Pyrenee."

To quote the words of the old ballad—

And ever since when England's kings,
Are diadem'd—no matter where—
The Champion Dymoke boldly flings
His glove, should treason venture there.

On gallant steed, in armour bright,
His visor close, and couch'd his lance,
Proclaimeth he the Monarch's right
To England, Ireland, Wales, and France.

Then bravely cry with Dymoke bold,
Long may the King triumphant reign,
And when fair hands the sceptre hold,
More bravely still—long live the Queen!

LAURA ALEX SMITH.



THE ARMOURY.

CONTRAST.

MIRTH is but the child of sorrow,
Joy is horn of pain's relief:
All our happiness we borrow
From the little graves of grief

Cares are planted in full measure,
Darkening weeds the soul infest,
But the seed they leave is pleasure,
And the garnered fruit is rest.

ICARUS.

I N SCHOOL.

V.—THE BREAK-UP.

"I don't understand a bit," I complained, for the fiftieth time that term.

"That's because you're only half alive," retorted Madge, also not for the first time. "You never understand anything; you're asleep all the time, or something. You've only got to ask any infant in the third why she is glad the holidays are coming, and you won't have to ask twice. Fancy not knowing!"

I sighed, and felt just as perplexed as ever. For, as the term drew to a close, the picture of the average schoolgirl, as Jack had painted her, gradually faded from my mind. I had come to school, expecting to find girls who mimed their language and minded their clothes, girls who put lessons before larks, girls who told tales, and girls who giggled, and all of them incipient drawing-room visitors. Instead of which, I had tumbled upon Madge Smith, a real, human person, who hated pretence as much as Jack had taught me to do, someone who honestly liked her fun even if she had more than a sneaking regard for the value of lessons. It is true that Madge Smith had more untidiness marks against her name than any other girl in the school; but she was a fair type, on the whole, of the average schoolgirl, and she was not at all like the picture that Jack had drawn of her.

"But," I protested, "it isn't as though we were miserable here ——"

"Isn't it, though!" interrupted Madge. "How awfully funny you are, Becky! I suppose you'd rather walk along dull London streets like this, than go to pantomimes and things with brothers and all sorts of jolly people, wouldn't you?"

She looked along the human crocodile of which we formed a humble pair, and gave an impatient stamp as a message came up from Mademoiselle that she was not to swing her arm.

"Look at that," she said in an injured tone. "They never leave you alone, for a moment. Why shouldn't I swing my arm if I like?"

"My mother never lets me swing my arm," I observed.

"No more does mine," rejoined Madge. "But that's altogether different."

I did not see it myself, so I returned to the original subject.

"Of course, I like the holidays for some things," I said, thoughtfully. "It's nice to see everybody again, and the dormice, and Jack, and the new kittens. But being here is very jolly too; and I shall miss the gymnasium classes awfully. And then, there's you, and Miss Strangways."

"Yes, there's me," she allowed. "But nobody could possibly mind leaving Miss Strangways. Just think how she lectures us, and starves us, and makes us grind. I wonder any of us can stand it."

I looked at her round plump face, and thought she stood it very well.

"She doesn't starve us, exactly," I objected. "There's lots to eat; and I'm never so hungry anywhere else, I know."

"Oh, there's lots to eat, right enough; but that isn't *eating*," replied Madge, making the unconscious definition of the epicure.

"And we don't grind very hard, even if she does make us," I added, a little illogically.

"I don't know about that. I don't, of course. But *you* won't be bottom of the class any more: I heard Nancy Waterhouse say, only this morning, that you are sure to go up, this term. So you must have ground, some time or other."

"Oh no," I said deprecatingly, although my voice trembled with pride at what Nancy had said, "you are much more likely to go up than I am."

We disputed the point politely, at some length, but were unanimous in arriving at the conclusion that we much preferred to remain where we were, at the bottom of the class.

"They don't pitch on you to be monitress, or to look after the younger ones, if you're at

the bottom," said Madge, going out of her way as she spoke to step in a tempting puddle. "And Strangles doesn't lecture you after prayers in the evening, about the responsibilities of your position."

"And Jack won't be able to chaff," I murmured.

I was obliged to own, as the days went on, that there was some cause to look forward to the end of the term, when it was going to be marked on the day of the break-up party, by so many exciting events. For one thing, there was the prize giving; and although I as a new girl ran no chance of winning one, there was at least the fun of speculating as to the lucky ones. Madge and I both agreed that the gymnasium prize was the only one worth having, though, to use her own words, "of course, your own people always like you to get a musty prize, for German, or tidiness, or something like that."

"I wouldn't get the tidiness prize for anything in the whole world," I declared.

"Well, you won't," remarked Madge. "It isn't meant for people like us. Audrey Thomson is going to get it. *She* never puts her hat into the linen drawer, or forgets to fold up her dressing gown. If it wasn't for girls like Audrey Thomson there wouldn't be a tidiness prize at all."

"What's the good of having prizes, then?" I asked doubtfully. It seemed a little quaint, I thought, that there should have to be a winner before there could be a prize.

"Well, of course, they aren't any good, are they? You always want to know such stupid things," said Madge, which brought the conversation to an abrupt end.

Besides the prize-giving there were going to be selected scenes from the "Tempest," and the whole school was going to take part in a cantata called, "The Ocean Wave," in which we were announced to appear "in costume." Nobody knew, two days before the party, what the "costume" was going to be, but this did not seem to concern anyone in the least.

"They'll leave your hair loose, and wrap

you in art muslin, and stick seaweed and shells all over the place," said Winifred Hill, with the *blasé* air of one who has assisted at many break-up parties. And the whole entertainment was going to conclude with a "Sculpture Gallery," in which, to our mingled pride and apprehension, Madge and I found we were to figure respectively as "Diana" and a "Head of Mercury."

"How am I to be a head?" I asked, in an amazed voice, of Dorothy Pearson.

"Wait and see, and don't ask so many questions," she replied, in the crushing manner that endeared her to all the younger ones. "You're anything but a *head* now," she added, with unnecessary severity.

"But none of the dresses are made yet, and we haven't had a single rehearsal, and the party is on Thursday," I exclaimed.

"Well, what of that?" said Dorothy calmly. "You don't know Miss Strangways. There is never more than one rehearsal, and none of them ever know their parts before the day, and the dresses are generally being finished when the people are waiting for the curtain to go up. But it's always all right, and everybody goes away pleased, and you hear Strangles telling everyone that the school work hasn't been interrupted. Do you see, now? Of course," she concluded with the sarcasm that belongs of right to the head girl, "I have no doubt that it will be done much better, now that you are here."

In spite of Dorothy's assurance, it really seemed as though nothing was going to be ready in time. The only thing Miss Strangways took any trouble to prepare was the programme, and that was printed with a charming design, and passed round the breakfast table for inspection quite a fortnight before the event.

"They are quite excellent, those new printers of mine," she observed with enthusiasm to Miss Poland. "They saw my idea at once, and they've actually done exactly what I told them. It's quite delightful to find printers who have no views of their own."

But if Miss Strangways seemed unduly casual at first about the rehearsals, it was a very different matter when the last examination was finished, and we all filed out of the lecture-room on the morning before the day of the break-up, and knew that we had done with books and pencil boxes for four whole weeks. The carpenters were putting up the platform in a trice, the French class-room was transformed by a multitude of gaily coloured fabrics, and Miss Strangways, bristling with energy and ideas, seemed to be in half-a-dozen places at once.

"We are getting on capitally!" she exclaimed to Mademoiselle, when the confusion was at its height.

Mademoiselle looked dubious.

"There are forty-five dresses to be made by to-morrow," she observed.

"And forty-five girls to make them," retorted Miss Strangways. Then, raising her voice, she continued, "Who is going to make me a cavern on the seashore? That's a good girl! How are you to make it? Oh, that's quite simple. You take a sofa——"

I heard no more, for I fled into the next room, in fear lest I should be called upon to help in making the school-room sofa into a cavern on the seashore. But I was not allowed to escape, for the next minute came a hue and cry after me.

"Becky! Where's Becky? Come along, childie; I want you to take some brown paper and make a rock, will you? Oh, it's quite simple; you must have a foundation of some sort, the coal-scuttle, or a foot-stool, or the fender, or something like that. And you get some shells from the glass case in the drawing-room—— What is it, Madge? How are you to get a bow and arrows? Why, make them of course! There's some gold thread in the basket, and —— now, where are all the sea-maidens? Will all the sea-maidens kindly take down their hair and put on muslin smocks? I am going to hear you sing the cantata once through. Come here, Ferdinand and Miranda, and do your scene while they are getting ready. And every one who is

going to take a man's part must go and put on her gymnasium dress *at once*, etc., etc."

"Am I a man or a woman?" Madge asked me, in an anxious tone.

"I don't know," I replied, miserably, as I busied myself in making the footstool into a neat brown paper parcel. "Mercury is a man, I suppose, so I must go and put on mine. I do wish to-morrow was over."

"It will never be over," said Madge, despairingly, and we separated in search of our gymnasium costumes.

But even that was not right.

"What's this for?" said Miss Strangways, when we presented ourselves in blue serge and white braid. "I said those who were going to take *men's* parts."

"I thought Diana was a man," stammered Madge.

"And Mercury surely isn't a woman?" I added in a perplexed tone. Miss Strangways smiled in a tolerant manner.

"You don't wear your gymnasium dress on your head, do you?" she said, and I crept away reduced in spirits.

The confusion seemed to increase rather than to lessen as the day went on. There were hasty rehearsals at intervals on the platform, when sundry girls in gymnasium dresses and others in unfinished court dress of no period in particular, struggled through their parts and tried to copy the vigorous action of Miss Strangways, who directed them from below. Dorothy Pearson sat in a dejected attitude, with blue serge and white braid peeping out from below a gorgeous green satin coat, and studied the part of Ferdinand with the desperation born of stern necessity. Nancy sat a little way off, stitching away at the white nun's veiling that was to suggest the simplicity of Miranda. Sea-maidens assisted one another in the suppression of obtrusive winter clothing, which insisted on asserting itself through the diaphanous green muslin that was supposed to cover it. And at the end of the evening, after a dress rehearsal in which nobody knew her part except Audrey Thomson, and not a

single dress had proved wholly satisfactory. Miss Strangways turned with a cheerful smile to Miss Poland, and said, "I think we are more forward than we have ever been before. They can go to bed now, and to-morrow morning we will run through everything once more, just to make it quite perfect."

Somebody said something about the Sculpture Gallery, which had not even been rehearsed once. But Miss Strangways only smiled again. "I can dress them at the time," she said. "I have got it all in my head."

Miss Strangways' head must have been remarkably full, for there were fifteen characters in the Sculpture Gallery, and nothing was ready for it except Diana's bow and arrows. And yet, when the time came for the representation, everybody agreed that the Sculpture Gallery was the greatest success of the evening. And nobody who applauded the wonderful group of white clad figures guessed that the head of Mercury was myself down to the shoulders, or that the pedestal on which it stood was the rest of me wrapped in linoleum, or that the winged hat on his head was the whitened crown of an old felt hat, and the white wings on it were torn out of Miss Strangways' Sunday bonnet. And the people who congratulated their stately hostess, as she stood at the door to bid them farewell, later on in the evening, would have been a little astonished if they had seen her just before in the green-room, with streaks of white across her face and the flour-dredger in her hand, surrounded by fifteen helpless schoolgirls in undraped sheets.

For some reason or another, the prize-giving had to be postponed till the end of the evening. Dramatically, this was the right moment for it, but the effect was curious as the girls stepped on the platform one by one, with the powder still clinging to their hair and face, and with every appearance of having hastily exchanged the classic linen sheet for the modern evening dress. Madge and I stood together far away at the back, and clapped the prize-winners till our hands were sore, and managed to enjoy ourselves

immensely, although our disappointment when Winifred Hill, a mere day girl, carried off the gymnasium prize, was extreme.

"She doesn't do Indian clubs half so well as you do, Becky, and anyone can beat her over the bar," whispered Madge, while the prize-giver, a celebrated and prosy barrister, was saying something about the ancient Greeks and physical exercise; and Winifred Hill, in book muslin and pink ribbons was carrying off "The Conquest of Mexico" in red morocco.

"She isn't in it with you when it comes to swinging on the rings," I replied, loyally. But I was suppressed hastily by my other neighbour, for Miss Strangways had risen to her feet and was beginning to speak.

"A kind friend," she was saying, "whose name I have been requested to keep secret, has offered a prize for history in each of the three classes. The girls have known nothing of this, and I have awarded it in each case to the one who has done the best work, both during the term and in the examination. In the first class it falls to our head girl, Dorothy Pearson."

A burst of applause came from us all as our idol and our tyrant walked in her disdainful and nonchalant way towards the platform.

"Doesn't she look splendid?" whispered Madge.

"Oh, she's all right," I replied, indifferently.

For, up to this time, Dorothy Pearson had only played the tyrant to me, and I had not yet reached the stage of idolatry. Madge, of course, replied with some warmth, and in the dispute that followed we lost Miss Strangways' next speech. We became gradually aware of a pause in the proceedings, however, and when we looked up to discover the reason, we found, to our horror, that everybody's eyes were turned in our direction. We had evidently been overheard, and we turned hot all over at the enormity of our behaviour.

"Go on!" said the girls around me, in frantic whispers. They seemed to have made a pathway in front of me, and I felt myself

being pushed forward from behind. I was certainly expected to do something, and an instinct of self-preservation made me shrink backwards. Then Miss Strangways raised her voice, and said my name a little impatiently.

"What is it?" I cried, desperately. "What have I done?"

A burst of laughter from everyone in the room drowned the words in which Miss Strangways tried to explain the situation; and, without knowing how I got there, I found myself on the platform, receiving the second prize for history at the hands of the learned barrister, who even forgot to be prosy, and merely smiled at me in an indulgent manner.

That evening I went to bed in a confused whirl of many emotions. It was the end of my first term at school, and I could never again be a new girl. I had won a history prize and gone up three places in my class, and nobody would call me stupid any more, or tell me that I ought to be in the third. I had also acquired the easy familiarity with the rest of my school-fellows which allowed me to kiss them all indifferently, and even to walk about with my arm round the waist of one or another of them. I behaved like everybody else, and gave flowers to my favourite teachers when no one was looking, and was happy for a week afterwards if they kissed me in return for them. I had, moreover, a real friend of my own, with whom I quarrelled nearly every day of my life, and I had come to know that an ardent admiration for those in authority had better be concealed, and that it was always well to grumble vigorously whenever there was the least occasion for doing so. And next term, I knew that I should be the first to ignore all the new girls, and should expect them to know everything without being told. In all respects I had become a school-girl. And yet, when I tried to persuade myself that I was glad of the fact, I felt doubtful.

Miss Strangways came to turn out the gas, that night; and she found me sitting disconsolately on the edge of the bed.

"What is it, child?" she asked, and sat down on the edge of the bed, too. And at the sound of her voice, I completely forgot the schoolgirl's code I had been at so much pains to acquire, and I weakly gave in to her charms, and began to cry.

"I didn't mean to change, and—and get different," I sobbed. "I told Jack I wouldn't; and now—now, he will tease so, and perhaps he won't like me so much; and there's the history prize, and I shall not dare to tell him about it, and—and—oh! why didn't I get the gymnasium prize instead?"

Miss Strangways did not smile.

"Poor child," she said. "Did you expect to stop in the same place, always? That would never do, you know, for the people we are fond of would just pass on, and we should be left behind by ourselves. We must always be going on, always. Did you find Jack unaltered, when he came back from his first term at school?"

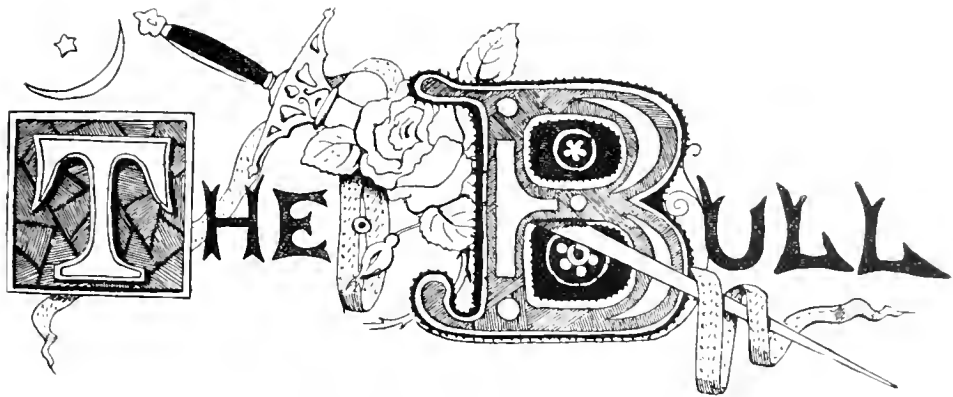
"Oh, no," I replied. "But he is a boy, and boys are different; at least, Jack always says they are. But he always expects me to be the same, because I am a girl. It is much harder to be a girl than a boy, isn't it? If you are a boy you can change as much as you please, and nobody says anything. And then, I promised Jack I would not get to like girls; but I do! And the worst of it is, I have asked Madge Smith to stay with me in the holidays, and if he doesn't like her——"

"Does he *never* like girls?" asked Miss Strangways. I hesitated a moment.

"There was Wilkins' minor's sister," I began, and remembered the awful jealousy I had cherished for her, during the brief period in which she had usurped my place in Jack's affections.

"Ah," said Miss Strangways, nodding wisely. "I should most certainly ask Madge to stay with you in the holidays. And I shouldn't worry about Jack, if I were you."

EVELYN SHARP.



"When April's glories shine on me."

MANY-MINDED April, month of smiles and tears, now sunny, now clouded, ever in varying mood, what a subtle charm hast thou!

We look upon the caprices of this change-ful month with the same indulgence we would upon those of a wilful child, knowing well that when its petulant fit is over, there will follow a season of calm and peace, all the more alluring from the storms that preceded it; for is not April the herald, the promise,

the foretaste of all the joys that are to follow it — the cloudless skies and brilliant sunshine of glorious summer, the pomp and pride of stately autumn. With all its smiles and tears, it is full of beauties which no other month brings before us.

"It bears a glass which shows us many more."

And its variable charm, its coquetry of frowns and favours, are they not consummated at last in the "merry month of May." Now do the hedges begin to deck themselves with green, the tender green of spring-time; the fruit trees show a wealth of pink and snowy blossoms, and those sweetest of all sweet flowers, the primrose and the daffodil, carpet the woods with beauty.

"Now daisies pied, and violets blue,
And lady-smocks all silver-white,
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue,
Do paint the meadows with delight."

April derives its name from the Latin word *Aperire*, to open, signifying the opening of buds and flowers. It is the only month of the year which is not called after Roman deities, or according to its place in the old Kalendar.

It was dedicated by the Romans to Venus, but the Saxons termed it *Ester* or *Easter-monat*, which may have been from two reasons: one being that it was the feast of their goddess Eastre, or Easter, and the other, perhaps, because at this season the winds generally blow from the east.

According to ancient mythology, April was represented by a beautiful youth or maiden, winged, crowned with a garland of myrtle and hawthorn-buds, and arrayed in a robe of green, carrying in one hand primroses and violets, in the other the zodiacal sign, *Taurus*, or the Bull.

Romulus assigned thirty days to April, one of which was afterwards taken away by Numa Pompilius, but restored to it again by Julius Cæsar, and it has retained that number ever since. In the Alban Kalendar it held the first station, and thirty-six days were given it.

From very ancient times the first day of April was kept as a form of holiday. Among the Romans it was the custom to abstain from the pleading of causes. Roman ladies



TAURUS: ♂

bathed under myrtle trees, afterwards crowning themselves with myrtle, and carrying offerings to the Temple of Venus. The origin of this custom seems to have come from a mythological story, that Venus, while drying her wetted locks by the river-side, was perceived by Satyrs.

"But soon with myrtle she her beauty veiled,
From whence this annual custom was entailed."

The ancient Britons made a high festival of the day, and unbounded hilarity reigned among the rich and poor alike. The origin of calling April 1st All Fools' Day seems to be almost unknown, but it is certainly very ancient. Some say it began from Noah's mistake in sending the dove out of the ark before the waters had abated, on the first day of the month among the Hebrews, which answers to our first of April. In England and France it has degenerated into a species of general practical joke, sending people on bootless errands, or luring them into ludicrous situations, entitling them in England to the epithet of "An April fool"; but the French term for the person imposed upon is "*Un poisson d'Avril*."

At their Huli festival, the Hindoos keep a general holiday on the 31st March, and their great subject of diversion is to send people on errands and expeditions that are to end in disappointment.

According to Maurice, in his "Indian Antiquities," the sports in England on the 1st of April, and those at the Huli festival, have their origin in the ancient practice of celebrating with festive rites the period of the Vernal Equinox, or the day when the new year of Persia anciently began.

Palm Sunday in this year falls on April 11th. Its celebration, as everyone knows, is very ancient, commemorating as it does our Lord's triumphant progress to Jerusalem from Bethany, immediately before His Passion. Its usage spread from Palestine through the East, but it was not established in the West until the sixth century.

One of the ancient customs on Palm Sunday was the throwing down of cakes

from the steeple of the parish church, to the boys of the village, who scrambled for them below. Another old custom took place on the Saturday before Palm Sunday, when the boys of the Grammar School of Lanark used to parade the streets with a palm, or as a substitute, a large tree of the willow species, in blossom, and decorated with daffodils and box-tree.

A very singular ceremony takes place at Caistor Church, Lincolnshire, on Palm Sunday. The origin seems wrapped in mystery, but certain lands in the parish of Broughton are held by the tenure of this annual usage. About the commencement of the first lesson during morning service, a man rides up to the porch of the north door, carrying a large ox-whip, which he cracks in front of the door three times. This whip appears to be a great feature in the ceremony, and is of peculiar construction. The stock is formed of a large piece of ash, tapering towards the top; this is wrapped round about half way down with white leather, enclosing some small pieces of mountain-ash. After cracking the whip three times, he wraps the thong (which is very large and made of strong white leather) round the stock, and laying some pieces of mountain ash lengthwise upon it, binds them together with whipecord. To the top of the whip-stock he next ties a purse, containing two shillings, in the olden days twenty-four silver pennies, and marches into church carrying it on his shoulder, taking up his stand in front of the reading-desk till the commencement of the second lesson. He then goes up nearer, and kneeling upon a cushion, holds the purse suspended over the clergyman's head, till the end of the lesson. At the conclusion of divine service, he carries the whip and purse to the Manor-house of Undon, the hamlet adjoining, where they are left. For this ceremony a new whip is made at Broughton every year.

Various reasons are suggested for the name Maunday, or Maundy, Thursday. Its ancient name was *dies mandati*, alluding to the *mandate* the Saviour gave his disciples to

offer the Holy Eucharist, also to his other *mandate*, after He had washed their feet, that they should love one another. Both these commands were given on the same day, and some writers suppose Maunday to be a corruption of *mandate*. On the other hand, the name may very probably be derived from the Saxon word *maund*, i.e., a basket, as this is a day set apart for distributing alms or gifts in baskets. The use of the word *Maundy* by old authors, for alms or gifts, may have had its origin in this charity.

Washing the feet of the poor, and waiting upon them at table, after receiving the sacrament on Maundy Thursday, was done in olden times, in imitation of their Redeemer, by archbishops and priests, and even kings and princes. The first English monarch to introduce the practice of feeding, clothing, and alms-giving to the poor on this day, appears to have been Edward the Third, in 1363. Several of his successors, in token of humility, used to wash the feet of those selected for the honour. It was done by Queen Elizabeth, when in her 39th year. The last of our English monarchs who observed the rite in person was James II. William of Orange left it to his almoner (at least the washing part), and it was continued in this manner for many years after. The washing of the feet has been discontinued for a great length of time, and since the beginning of the present reign an additional sum of money has been given instead of provisions.

Good Friday (falling this year on April 16th) has been kept as a solemn fast day from the earliest period of Christianity. The term "Good Friday" is peculiar to the English church, and not of any remote origin. The Saxons named it *Long Friday*, no doubt from the length of its offices and fastings, but its ancient title is *Holy Friday*. In former days, it was the custom on Good Friday for English monarchs to hallow certain rings, the touch of which was supposed, in those days of ignorant superstition, to be a preventive against cramp and sickness. The origin of the usage appears to have been a

ring given by Edward the Confessor to a beggar who solicited alms of him. The ring was carried by this mendicant to Jerusalem; some pilgrims from Palestine brought it back, and returned it again to St. Edward. For several centuries this ring was preserved in Westminster Abbey and looked upon with great veneration, so much so, that Sovereigns of England were thought to be able, by touching them with it, to impart its virtue to other rings, which were called "cramp-rings," and a special service was held for their consecration.

In the earlier days of history much importance was attached to eggs in connection with Good Friday, though they were not made such a feature of as on Easter Day. Some people used to preserve all eggs laid on Good Friday, as it was then thought they would extinguish a fire in which they were thrown.

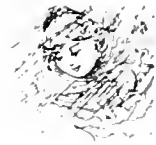
In England the only sort of eatable now considered sacred to Good Friday, are *hot cross buns*, and I suppose hardly any house in the kingdom is without them that day, though they are not of late years sold so much in the streets, to the not unmusical cry—

"Hot cross buns—

One a penny buns—two a penny buns;

One a penny—two a penny—hot cross buns."

About a hundred years ago there were two famous pastry cooks in Chelsea, who were



great rivals in the art of making hot cross buns, and so celebrated for them that crowds of customers used to throng to their shops and assemble in the wooden piazzas in front, during the whole day, to consume quantities of these buns. To buy them anywhere else would have been considered most unfashionable.

Our cross buns resemble in a great degree, the consecrated loaves bestowed by the Western Church on those who, for some cause, are not able to receive the Holy Eucharist. These loaves are made of the same dough from which the Host itself is taken, and marked with a cross. After Mass they are given by the priest to the people, and reverently kissed before they are eaten.

It is remarkable that from the earliest periods the loaves of the Greeks were signed with a cross and offered to their gods under a name which in the accusative case is *boun*. Two loaves marked with an impression of the cross, were found in Herculaneum.

One of the great religious observances formerly held in England on Good Friday, was the "setting up" of the Easter Sepulchre. In this was placed the Host with a Crucifix, and according to the Sarum rite, it was watched from Good Friday till early in the morning of Easter day. One of the most curious of these sepulchres was at St. Mary Redcliffe's Church, Bristol, 1471. The following is a description of it—"Well gilt with fine gold, and an image of God Almighty rising out of same sepulchre, with all the ordinance that belongeth thereto, that is to say a lathe made of timber and iron-work. Item: Heaven made of timber and stained cloth. Item: Hell made of timber and iron-work, with devils to the number of thirteen. Item: Four knights armed, keeping the sepulchre with their weapons in their hands, that is to say, two spears, two axes, and two shields. Item: Four pairs of angel's wings for four angels, made of timber and well-painted. Item: The Father, the Crown and Visage, the Ball with a Cross upon it, well gilt with fine gold. Item: The Holy

Ghost coming out of Heaven into the sepulchre."

Barrett's Bristol.

On the gospel side of the chancel, nearly opposite the Sedilia, is an arch, forming a recess and canopy to an altar tomb, which was frequently used as an "Easter" sepulchre. Pious people frequently left instructions in their wills for their tombs to be so built that they would serve for sepulchres.

Two of the finest examples of stone "sepulchres" are at Eckington Church, Lincolnshire, and Hawton Church, Nottinghamshire. They are richly decorated in the style of Edward III., with representations, among other appropriate imagery, of the Roman soldiers asleep.

The practice of "setting up" the sepulchre at Easter was discontinued after the Reformation.

Easter Day, though a movable festival, is the most ancient and most important, as it governs the whole of the other movable



A HARBINGER OF SUMMER.

feasts throughout the year. The period of its celebration has varied in different countries, but the Anglican Prayer Book contains the following rule: "Easter Day is always the first Sunday after the full moon, which happens upon, or next after, the twenty-first day of March; and if the full moon happens upon a Sunday, Easter Day is the Sunday after."

The festival of Easter was called *Pascha* in the Greek and Latin Churches, a word derived from the name given by the Hebrews (and signifying a passage) to their great feast, the Passover. It is still called in Yorkshire *Pace*, plainly a corruption from the ancient word. The English name of Easter may have been derived from the Saxon word *Oster*, to rise, in allusion to the Resurrection. Easter Sunday was anciently called the Great Day and Feast of Feasts.

In the thirteenth century it was made a practice to seize all ecclesiastics found walking abroad between the days of Easter and Pentecost, and liberty was granted to them only on payment of money. This was in memory of the seizure of the Apostles after the Passion.

The origin of the connection of eggs with Easter may be accounted for in this manner. As the whole living world went into the ark, and were shut up for a season, like the life in the egg, so by the egg the ancients symbolised for ages the tradition of that great event, bringing eggs to the altars of their gods. The entrance of Christ into the tomb, and His deliverance from it, were at once typified by the ark, and its symbol, the egg. Hence, throughout Christendom, has the egg become allied to the feast of the Resurrection.

April 23rd is St. George's Day, the patron saint of England. St. George, the child of noble Christian parents, was born in Cappa-

docia, but on the death of his father he and his mother went to Palestine, her native land. St. George having become a soldier by profession, was made a tribune, but his conduct was so irreproachable and his courage so great, the Emperor Diocletian preferred him to a higher position.

When the Emperor waged war against Christianity, St. George laid aside the marks of his dignity, and, throwing up his commission, remonstrated with the emperor upon the cruelty of his edicts. For this he was thrown into prison: first tried by promises, then by torture, but nothing could shake his constancy. On the next day, after being led through the town, he was beheaded.

The Greeks have always distinguished him by the title of the Great Martyr, and keep his festival as a holiday of obligation.

In 1222 the great National Council held at Oxford commanded his feast to be kept as a holiday of lesser rank throughout England. The representation of him tilting at a dragon is an emblematic figure, signifying that by his faith and Christian fortitude he conquered the devil, called the dragon in the Apocalypse.

The noble Order of the Knights of St. George was founded by Edward the Third in 1330. It first consisted of twenty-six knights besides the Sovereign, but in 1786 six more were added, owing to the increase of the Royal family.

As recently as the fifteenth year of the reign of Charles II. the festival of St. George was conducted with extraordinary solemnity and magnificence at Windsor, in the glorious chapel erected there to his name.

"Right manfully his cross he bore,
And ran his race of torments sore;
For Thee he poured his life away,
With Thee he lives in endless day."

GERTRUDE OLIVER-WILLIAMS.



LETTERS TO A DEBUTANTE BY A WOMAN OF THE WORLD.

6.—ON THE NEED FOR CONTROLLING THE TONGUE.

No one has come to years of discretion without realising how his world has become smaller as his size has increased. To visit houses which you have not seen since childhood is to find rooms, in one's memory palatial, now shrunk to contemptible proportions. Childhood is the time of illusions and of golden dreams. Adolescence somewhat robs the world of its glamour. Age strips it naked of all illusions. The age of perfect happiness is that of enthusiasms, of aspirations, of idealisations. Wear, therefore, your rose-coloured spectacles while you may. Look on the poetry and romance of life as long as you can. The night cometh when no man may do so. While it is yet day be kind of heart, and charitable in tongue, lenient to the faults of others, tolerant of their failings. There comes a time when life's bitterness robs your spirits of their buoyancy, your eyes of their rose-coloured spectacles. When the kindly glasses fall, alas for your ideals! alas for you!

The charity which thinketh no evil is hard to find, still rarer in the world is the gentle tongue. She who possesses it is more beloved than if she were endowed with the physical perfections of a Venus. For it is neither beauty nor intellect that keeps love, however much either may attract it. Sweetness of nature, unselfishness, regard for the feelings of others wear better in the long run than physical or mental charms. Moral endowments outweigh all others in the close companionship of life, which marriage brings about. In the end they are most potent in society, for beauty perishes, intellect can weary, but qualities of heart endure. In the endeavour to be amusing it is easy to be sharp of tongue. The consequence of such sharpness does not dawn upon the utterer of

the unkind speeches until long afterwards. To raise a laugh, to wile away boredom:

Full many a shaft at random sent,
Finds mark its archer little meant.

Alienation of friends, accumulation of enemies, dislike of acquaintances, are a few only of the consequences of an unbridled tongue. In the cock-sureness of youth, which is so certain of itself whatever else may befall, it is easy to laugh at the waning beauty catching at each straw which helps it to retain a fast fading youth. The spectacle is pathetic rather than amusing to those of maturer years. To the very young and the stony-hearted how infinitely entertaining, how easily ridiculed! The sublime contempt for physical subterfuges lessens when the need for the first false tooth appears. There is nothing so laughable now in the endeavour to stow away the grey hairs where they will not so prominently clamour for notice. The middle-aged woman views the struggle with destiny, and the inevitable from a different stand-point to the *débutante*. She has gained in breadth of view what she has lost in height. If she be wise she accepts her fate with dignified cheerfulness. If she be foolish she resents the decrees of Providence; she is jealous of those younger and better favoured than herself, her tongue lets itself go in unkind and bitter comments on, perhaps, unwise but innocent doings, and finally experience and fading charms find themselves in antagonistic relationship to youth and beauty. Thus we see the young jeering at their elders, the elders assuming a critical and uncharitable aspect when viewing the foibles of youth. "*On ne jette des pierres qu'à l'arbre chargé de fruits.*" Sourness of nature finds its outlet in bitterness of tongue. In early youth the unruly member seldom wounds from real ill-nature. Heedlessness and idleness cause it to err, and want of repression induces at last lamentable consequences.

The sarcastic is little better than the evil tongue. It serves to amuse those who for the moment are not lashed by its whip. It

earns no confidence, however, gains no esteem. Those who have laughed loudest at the witticisms directed against others are in turn most fearful lest the arrows should be aimed at themselves. They are never deceived into imagining that they can escape the clever tongue. They fear and hate it when laughing most. Let the *débutante*, therefore, be warned in time, and school herself never to be witty at the price of kindness, never to be amusing at the expense of others.

The gossiping tongue, which dispenses harmless news and indulges in good-natured personalities, earns no more respect than its more dangerous rival. It is puerile to be forever concerned in the affairs of others, and tittle-tattle belittles the mind and does nobody any good. What purpose can it serve to know whence Lady A. gets her gowns, or how much Mr. B. lost at Monte Carlo? Are we any wiser for the assurance that Mr. C. owes his tailor hundreds, or that the D.'s are not on speaking terms with each other? No one is the happier for details of domestic quarrels, and it improves nobody's morals to find out how bad others are.

And the flattering, fawning, lying tongue is worse than all! Nothing in life is more hateful, nothing works greater mischief. A life-time of misery, an old age devoid of self-respect and happiness lies before her who suffers her tongue to stray from the paths of truthfulness.

The tongue of exaggeration follows close in the wake of the lying tongue. Guiltless of intent to misrepresent, it yet often distorts facts to the extent of downright want of truth. It is perilously easy to produce an effect by deepening the shadows and heightening the lights of a picture. A polychrome is always more attractive than a monochrome. Insensibly the desire to create a sensation in pictorial art, either as applied to brush or word-painting, leads the artist into the pit-fall of exaggeration. As the painter wanders from the path of truth in Nature, so he loses the just sense of its values; and

with that loss goes his sensitiveness to gradations of colour and delicacy of tones. The final result is hardness, crudeness, glaring contrasts, want of atmosphere, and eventual vulgarity. Much the same result follows on a course of hyperbole. A landscape over-coloured and full of violent dissimilitudes is like a tale told by the tongue of exaggeration, where everything is either black or white, and in which neutral tints are wanting.

More general than any other among women is the inaccurate tongue. A slipshod habit of speech, a want of observation, is at the bottom of this universal fault. Women seldom tell a tale accurately; either the time they ascribe to the incident is too late or too early, or the place where the adventure happened is mis-called, or the sequence of events is topsy-turvy. Sometimes the wrong end of a story is seized, and occasionally ludicrous, and not seldom lamentable, consequences ensue. All this because women will not pause to observe carefully, to listen with attention, and to relate conscientiously.

And now let us look at the work of a righteous tongue: one which slandereth not its neighbour, is charitably disposed to all men, and gives utterance to nothing false. With dignity it speaks, with earnestness, with exactness. Wit without malice drops like pearls from those lips. The righteous tongue is quick to help and cheer the despondent. It is equally prompt to speak tender words of sympathy to the broken-hearted. It counsels with words of wisdom the young and foolish, and puts strength and heart into the moral coward. By its soft answers it turns away the wrath of many. All men praise it, none can revile it. Then, dear *débutante*, remembering all this, learn to watch over the tongue, to think before you speak, to weigh well your words, to be wise in time.

The wolf avoids the pit, the hawk the snare,
And hidden hooks teach fishes to beware.

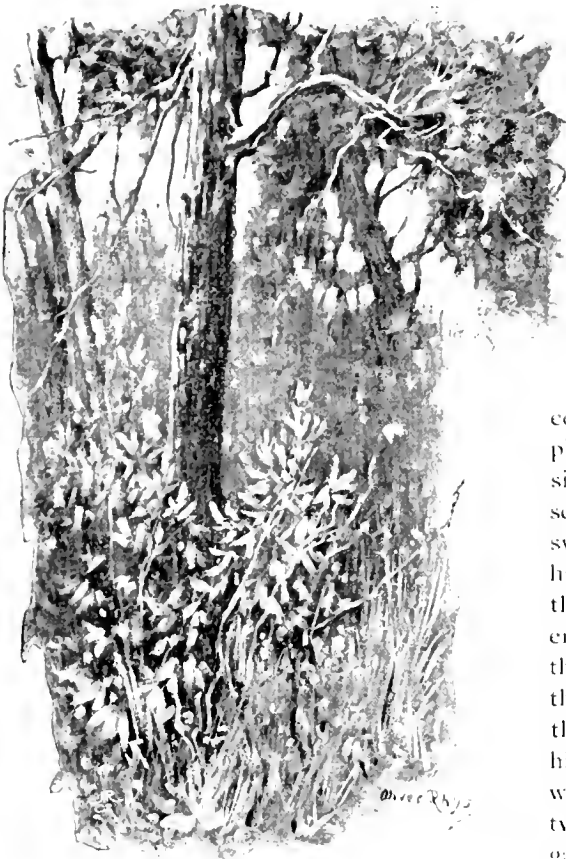


ALTHOUGH the great limbs of London, overlapping sleepy village and sunny pasture in their ceaseless growth, have drawn the little hamlet of Highgate into the great suburban girdle, it has lost less by the change than its neighbours, Hampstead, Haringay, and Holloway. Its position has doubtless much to do with its conservative bias: it stands three hundred and fifty feet above the level of the Thames; it can be reached in the course of an afternoon by a tedious network of trams, buses, and brakes, or by rail in a journey about as formidable as that to Birmingham. Thus, while the rallying point of the "Hot Gospellers" and the duelling prestige of Chalcot Farm, are dim myths, much of the primitive simplicity of the northern village remains.

But, beyond this old-world seclusion, what most delights the tired cockney are the stretches of woodland that close Highgate in —no trim parks with railed-in grass plots and grimy trees, but tangled underwood and hollow dell, where one can lie in leafy bower and hear the notes of the wild bird. They are jealously guarded remnants of the great Forest of Middlesex, which formed a belt across the north of London, including in its space the Marylebone fields, now Regent's Park, St. John's Wood, Kilburn, and a great

part of Hertfordshire. Its proximity to the Metropolis made it much fancied as a Royal hunting ground, and its advantages did not escape the keen eye of the Conqueror. How wild these parts were in the good old days may be gleaned from the works of contemporary writers, mention being made of stags, bucks, wild boars and bulls, and the lowly pilgrims to the shrine of St. Albans were frequently victims to the famished wolves which abounded in the dense brushwood.

For centuries after the Norman Conquest the woods formed a hunting-lodge for the Bishops of London, but these prelates only held a life-interest, which they often found it difficult to sustain against the encroachments of the Court and the citizens. The ancient records are full of the struggles that took place between the clergy and the people to assert their individual rights in the chase. The latter held a charter bestowed on them by the first Henry, in acknowledgment of his debt to the citizens of London; we read that "the citizens were not slow to avail themselves of these privileges, for they took delight in fowling with merlins, hawks, etc., and likewise in hunting in Middlesex and Hertfordshire and all the Chiltern country, which they had a right to do." But with the growth of the power of the crown, these civic privi-



IN THE WOODS.

leges were gradually curtailed, until they disappeared altogether under the high-handed authority of Bluff King Hal, as the following proclamation issued in 1546 by that amiable monarch shows - "Forasmuch as the King's most Royal Majestie is much desirous of having the game of hare, partridge, pheasant and heron preserved in and about his manor at Westminster for his disport and pastime; that is to saye, from his said Palace toe our Ladye of Oke, toe Highgate and Hamsted Heath, to be preserved for his owne pleasure and recreation; His Royale Highness doth straightway charge and commandeth all and singular of his subjects, of what estate and condition soever they be, not toe attempt toe hunte, toe hawke or kill anie of the said games within the precincts of Hamsted, as

they tender his favour and wolvde eschewe] the imprisonment of theyre bodies and further punishment, at his Majestie's will and pleasure."

Gradually the woods disappeared, as the greater need for pasture land increased, and Highgate became a great agricultural centre for the supply of the city. The remaining forest land swarmed with pigs, which were turned in to fatten upon the fallen acorns, the market value of the woodlands being reckoned by the number of swine they could sustain. It is hard to conjure up a picture of these far-off solitudes, wrapped in silence save for the grunting of these porcine scavengers and the hoarse shout of the brutal swincherd; or by the cheery blast of the hunting-horn, as a "gaye company" canter through the narrow glades. They are pretty enough now, more truly sylvan and free from the landscape gardener than any spot nearer than Epping; but one feels all the time that the tram is waiting for us at the foot of the hill, and that the city clerk will soon be wending home, black bag in hand. Yet only twenty odd years ago there were turnpike gates and country roads, along which great droves of cattle bellowed and hustled on their way to Smithfield.

The woodlands proper are now divided into two estates—"The Woods" and "Caen Wood." The first are held by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, the successors of the proud bishops, and are open to the public, but they are secluded enough except on the occasional Bank Holiday, when 'Arry casts his customary blight upon the beauties of Nature. At other times one can dream in peace, "far from the madding crowd," with only the interruption of a stray bird catcher or the sport of children. No historical value attaches to this forest land as compared with the beautiful seat of the Earl of Mansfield. Here, indeed, a gallery of celebrities and a wealth of incident lies before one for the choosing. The breezy heights have always had an attraction for the Scotch nobility,

who, on the Act of the Union, left their barren highlands for the flesh-pots of the south. The beauty of Caen Wood House attracted the notice of John, Duke of Argyle, who figures so creditably in "The Heart of Midlothian." It was he who extinguished the hopes of the Stuarts, and quelled the rising of 1715, when the Old Pretender made his futile struggle for his crown. The martial spirit of the duke also helped the victories of Ramillies, Malplacquet and Oudenarde.

His successor did not share such popular esteem; indeed no public minister has reaped more popular odium than the third Earl of Bute. His marriage with the daughter of Lady Mary Wortley Montague brings that charming personality into close connection with the estate. In one of her letters she thus refers to it—"I well remember Caen Wood House, and cannot well wish you a more agreeable place. It will be a great pleasure to me to see my grand-children run about the garden." The great Lord Mansfield bought the property from the Earl of

Bute, for what the latter termed "a song." When the former owner's exchequer would admit of it, he wished to re-purchase the property, and offered to give the judge *two songs*, and in addition to play "Through the wood, laddie," on the bagpipes. But even such a temptation as this failed to persuade Lord Mansfield, who expressed his fear that the house would earn thereby the title of "Bagpipe Hall."

Caen Wood House will always be associated with the wild excesses of the Gordon rioters. Not content with burning his lordship's house in Bloomsbury Square, with its fine library, they sought for further vengeance on his Highgate seat. Their dire intent was fortunately checked by the clever ruse of Giles Thomas, mine host of the "Spaniard's Tavern." This famous hostelry was a halting place for the rabble after their toilsome march up the steep Hampstead hill. The occasion was seized by the landlord to throw open his house to them, and to press his good liquor upon them with true English



FROM PARLIAMENT FIELDS.



ONE OF THE PONDS.

hospitality. At the same time a messenger was hastily sent off to the Horse Guards' barracks, and by the time the crowd had torn itself away from the fascination of free drinks, they were met by a bold front of cavalry, which quickly cooled their fevered blood and scattered them in wild disorder back to the slums of the Metropolis.

The property is still in the hands of the Mansfield family, the present venerable peer living in strict retirement behind the impenetrable belt of trees. Little can be seen from the road of the estate, until passing round Mill Hill-lane, the woods open into green pasture lands in which lie some of the famous Highgate ponds.

Among the other estates of Highgate are Caen Wood Towers, owned by Mr. Reckitts, of "blue" fame, and Holly Lodge, the residence of Lady Burdett-Coutts. Attached to this is Holly village, which was erected by the great benefactress in 1845 for the well-being of the indigent middle-class. It is a charming group of ten cottages built of yellow and moulded brick, with stone dressings, and are models of their kind. More historical interest attaches to Lauderdale House, a

Stuart building in which many notable figures played their part in the drama of life. It was named after its first owner, the renegade lord deputy of Scotland, who after selling the Martyr King to the English Parliament, basked in the Royal favour of his successor and achieved execrable fame by his barbarities to the hunted Covenanters. Macaulay says of him, "Lauderdale, the tyrant deputy of Scotland at this period,

loud and coarse both in mirth and anger, was perhaps, under the outward show of boisterous frankness, the most dishonest man in the whole cabal." During the earl's absences in Scotland on his devilish missions, the merry monarch would borrow the Highgate mansion for the use of the kindly, but erring, Nell Gwynne. It was out of one of its windows that she held her infant son, threatening its destruction unless Charles would bestow upon it a long withheld title. The quick witted king was equal to the occasion. Instantly he cried "Stop, Nellie; save the Earl of Burford." Thus was founded the great house of St. Albans. But near by was the cottage of one who looked with severe eye on these merry doings. Andrew Marvell's dwelling was small and unpretentious, as became so grave a scribe. It was the irony of fate that placed this Puritan and patriot in such proximity to the loosest court in the annals of English history.

It is impossible in so short an article to more than mention Cromwell House, where dwelt General Ireton and his wife, the Protector's eldest daughter, and which now

is turned to milder uses as a convalescent home for sick children; or of Arundel House, no longer existing, where the unfortunate Lady Arabella Stuart was brought from Barnet, when her health broke down under the harsh treatment of the modern Solomon. It was from here that she corresponded with her husband in the Tower, and arranged the mutual plan for escape, which ended in her own incarceration there, and death, four years afterwards. It was at Arundel House that the great Lord Bacon died from exposure while watching the effect of snow as a process for preserving a dead hen.

Highgate abounds in ancient taverns which were the product of the old coaching days, when as many as eighty stage coaches would pull up at the Red Lion Inn every day. Among the other celebrated Inns were the Angel, Gate House, the Mitre, the Green Dragon, the Bell, the Rose and Crown, the Bull, the Wrestlers, the Coach and Horses, and many others. At all of these a custom prevailed, which ludicrous in itself, has given to Highgate more celebrity than even the illustrious names we have touched upon. It was known as "Swearing on the horn." The ceremony took place whenever a coach unloaded its passengers. A few skilful questions soon led to the detection of the uninitiated, when the landlord would bring forward the mystic symbol, which took the form of horns fixed on a pole of five feet in length. This was placed before the new comer, who was requested to bear his head and listen to a long peroration from mine host, in which he was informed that henceforward that individual must be addressed as his adopted father, and he as his adopted son, under forfeiture of a bottle of wine on either side. If the traveller thus enrolled should be absolutely penniless, he had the privilege of calling for a bottle of wine

at any hostelry in Highgate, but if he should be convicted of so doing when possessed of means, however small, he in turn paid the penalty "for trying to cheat and cozen his old father." He is also adjured not to kiss the maid, while he could kiss the mistress, unless he liked the maid best. But sooner than lose a good chance, he could kiss them both. There were many other advantages which it would take too long to enumerate—the speech concluding with these words: "So now, my son, God bless you: kiss the horns, or a pretty girl, if you see one here, which-



CHURCH BOTTOM WOOD.

ever you like best, and so be free of Highgate." Lord Byron was among the great people who have been "sworn at Highgate"; he has left the following record of the custom:

"Many to the steep of Highgate hie:
Ask ye, Briton shades! the reason why?
'Tis to the worship of the solemn horn,
Grasped in the holy hand of mystery.

In whose dread name both men and maids are sworn,
And consecrate the oath with draught and dance
till morn."

The horns employed at these rites may still be seen at the principal inn, handed on from one tenant to another with the goodwill of the house, but the ceremony is quite obsolete, with the rest of the good-humoured foolery in which our ancestors found sport. Well, perhaps the gain is not all ours: the Superior Person is occasionally depressing.

E. TAUNTON WILLIAMS.

RONDEAU REDOUBLE.

My weariness has vanished with the day,
My heart has quieted her anxious fears;
Mine eyes gaze gladly for the sun's first ray,
My soul forgets the sadness of past years.
Far in the East the first faint flush appears,
Rose-red that shames the night's dim sombre grey
Of daylight, and the glistening morning nears—
My weariness has vanished with the day.
I am so overjoy'd, I scarce can pray;
So rapture filled, I dare not yield to tears;
I only know that Grief has passed away,
My heart has quieted her anxious fears.
To each sad soul grey Grief her voice endears
As to each heart she chants her mournful lay;
Her dirge my happy heart no longer hears,
Mine eyes gaze gladly for the sun's first ray.
This form, erewhile a listless mass of clay,
Patterned with heart-burns that Grief's finger
sears,
Waked by joy's tones can nowise but obey,
My soul forgets the sadness of past years.
Although before joy's day the darkness clears,
And Hope's glad psalm my soul again can say,
When evening mists obscure the sun that cheers,
To me from groves of Grief again will stray
My weariness.

"AN AFFECTION OF THE HEART."

BY MARY HOWARTH.

CHAPTER I.

THIS is a story of love, and of love frustrated, and it is told by myself, who am an old Scotchwoman of poor and hard-working parents. Yet can I write the history I have to tell, in plain words maybe, but intelligently, for, as no doubt you know, the Scotch think much of education, and spare no pains to bestow good solid learning upon their sons and daughters.

My mistress, the Comtesse de Loignan, was a French lady of high distinction. For upwards of eighteen years I was in her service. It came about in this way: Madame was travelling in Scotland, and at the time her baby was born found herself in Inverness, near to the place where I dwelt. I had a babe myself at the time—wee bonnie thing! I may not talk of him even now, for the tears bear my eyes at this distance of time, as I see him decked out in his white shroud, and Dugald, my husband, sobbing over him. My lady's infant came to me as a consolation in that bitter hour. It was the minister brought me under madame's notice, and I became the little one's foster-mother. The fishing season was at its height then, and my man, with the rest, went out upon the waters. Ah, me! he never came back, my Dugald, except as a corpse on the shore, and I was left "all one," as we say in Scotland. Madame was kind and sympathetic; she was wishful to get back to Paris now, and so was Monsieur, her husband; but the babe was too young to be without its natural food, being at best a weakly wean, so they asked me if I would leave my home and go southwards with them.

If you be mothers yourselves, my mistresses who read this, you will not wonder at my answer. My foster-child was the only link to hold me to earth then; it was a bond between me and my dead dear ones; it kept alive in me the soothing sense of mother-

hood. I forgot sometimes that Elfine—that was the fancy name my mistress had chosen for her—that Elfine, I say, was not my own. She was my blessing. I never looked behind me once, but set out for England right willingly, knowing that Dugald and my little bairn were as near about me there as when I knelt by their grave in the old kirkyard. In course of time wee Elfine grew out of babyhood; but yet I stayed on with my lady, first as my childie's nurse, then, when she was too old for nurses, as waiting-woman to the Countess and her daughter. In this way, many years slipped by.

My mistress was fond of wandering, especially after the death of the Count, her husband, which occurred suddenly when Elfine was ten. We used to take long journeys—I and the child and my lady—in the summer to Switzerland, in the winter to Rome or Petersburg, in the spring to London.

At all these places the Countess had her own hotels or houses, because she was very rich—some said as rich, or richer, as his Grace the Duke of Fife, and many of my other Scottish nobles. She had several offers of marriage in her widowhood, but she used to tell me she had had enough of marriage and should remain as she was.

I, as well, was often sought in the same honourable way, but my ring was on my finger, and I told them I belonged, as I always shall, to Dugald.

In the early summer one year, as was our wont, we were occupying my lady's house in London. I will not stop here to describe the place, which was as beautiful as wealth could make it, because I have got to the time when Ruby came, or, rather, was brought, into our lives. Elfine was twelve; dear child, she had never quite outgrown her natural delicacy of constitution, though I had done my best to strengthen her, but she was as lovely a wee missy as you would wish to see. When we walked in the Park in the morning, or she rode her pony, with the children of English lords as companions, people would turn to look again at her. I

knew it was at her, though the English women who attended their charges claimed the distinction for their round-faced chubby children. At this I held my peace, being as sure that Elfine with her fairy-like beauty and marvellous grace, bore the palm in those assemblages, as I am that your English nurses and attendants are as impudent and disagreeable as any in the universe, if not more so. It is useless to contradict me, because I keep my opinion just the same.

Well, one Saturday afternoon my lady took a freak into her head.

"Pack the smallest saratoga," said she to me, "for two nights. We will go away from London this afternoon until Monday. Open the Bradshaw, Elfine, and tell me the first place your eye alights on; there we will go."

Elfine did as she was bid, and the place was Tunbridge Wells. "Be it so," said my mistress, and as there was a train handy, we arrived at the little Kentish country-town in good time, and went to the best hotel, where they made much of my mistress, as you may imagine, bowing and scraping and doing all they could for her pleasure.

You will see soon what great events spring from small causes, and remember if you please that little Elfine alighted on Tunbridge Wells in the guide book.

From the window of our bedroom the child saw in the distance an old church tower, and expressed a wish to her mother that we should attend service there. Here again her little hand led us. The church, we were informed, was that of the village of Langworthy, and on the morrow a carriage took us thither, and we worshipped there. I had long found it impossible to find a place of my own persuasion of creed in the many countries we visited, but had so far set my face against entering Roman Catholic churches.

The service was simple and hearty; I remember nothing particular in connection with it, excepting one circumstance, that we were placed close by several rows of school boys, the odour of whose well oiled hair

caused my little one to ask me where the honey was kept.

My mistress also noticed the school boys, but in a way differing from ours, one indeed which caused her to take the step that gives occasion to this narrative, and which added another to the string of whimsical actions stretched over her life.

When church was out, motioning us to follow her, she betook herself to the boys' school hard by, where the children were engaged in a parting prayer, preparatory to leaving for their homes. She waited for a moment or two until they had risen and were dismissed by a sign from their master, then in her high clear-cut well-bred voice addressed the astonished pedagogue.

"You have a boy here who sings," said she regarding him imperiously through the glasses which she held to her eyes by a long tortoiseshell handle.

"Many, madam," stammered the man, "many."

My mistress waved her hand impatiently, though courteously. "Not many," she objected, "one only. You and I differ as to what singing means. Bawling, as you say in your expressive though uncouth tongue, and singing, are not synonymous.

The man bowed.

"But," resumed my lady, accepting the bow graciously, I presume as a just meed of acknowledgment to her superior powers of discrimination, "I am not here to discuss the meaning of words. You have a boy who sings. His hair is brown, his eyes hazel; he is as tall, well almost as my arm here above the elbow; ah—bah!—you have many such you would say. His voice is like an angel's. What is his name? Where does he live?"

The master looked concerned.

I understood him. I knew that he resented the impertinence of this aristocrat. What is his name? Where does he live? What is that to you, Madame, is the answer he would like to have given. But he didn't.

"'Tis for his good and welfare I would

know," continued my mistress, whose cosmopolitan knowledge told her she had gone too far with this meek-faced Englishman. "I am the Comtesse de Loignan; I would take him and educate him. His powers should not be permitted to die in this stupid Langworthy of yours. The world has need of voices so pure and fine as his."

The master bowed again, with a native grace.

I recognised—now that he spoke above a murmur—that somewhere or other in his pedigree there lay an undercurrent of Scottish blood; he bowed, I repeat, with a *native* grace.

"It is possible that your ladyship refers to the lad Reuben Grey," he said quietly. "His dwelling is that cottage where the white roses climb above the porch."

The Comtesse thanked him and withdrew.

Raising her parasol to shield her eyes from the midday sun she walked across to the cottage, Elfine and I following as before. The people inside the little house were at dinner; there was, of course, no entrance passage, and it was easy to see through the porch as we advanced the stone floor and the shelves on the wall, the well-cleaned hearth, the round wood table devoid of cloth, and the eight or ten persons gathered round it, though the whole lay in deep cool shadow.

My lady struck the door with the ferrule of her ivory-handled parasol, and the mother of the family party immediately rose and dropped a respectful curtsy.

The Countess uttered the self-same words with which she had accosted the school-master.

"You have a boy here who sings."

"Up with thee, Reuben; 'tis thee the lady means," said the mother promptly. She knew quickly enough.

The lad rose, pushing back his chair over the stone floor with a grating noise, and pulling his front lock of hair. He had hazel eyes, brown hair, and he stood rather higher than my lady's elbow; this was the boy. He was dressed after the fashion of a country

lad. His corduroy breeches did not reach his ankles, but hung midway between his knees and feet; his waistcoat was too short, and the sleeves of his coat did not nearly cover his rough red wrists.

The time had not arrived for the parents to afford a new suit for the eldest boy; when it did, the clothes of the rest would all take a step downwards in the family scale. I was cognizant of the plan.

"Sing!" said my mistress.

The boy blushed burning red beneath his tan. All the diners stuffed their mouths very full and munched on, excepting the mother, who remained standing.

"Aye sing, Reuben," said she, and the boy sang:

"For thee, O dear, dear country, mine eyes their vigils keep,

For very love beholding thy happy name they weep;

The mention of thy glory is unction to the breast,
And medicine in sickness, and love, and life, and rest."

All through the lines that follow sang the lad.

"'Tis but a poor old fashioned tune," apologised his mother, as he finished. "But 'tis Sunday, so he must sing hymns or psalms. Aye, but Reuben, thou mightest have given us the *Te Deum* with variations."

"The hymn suffices," interrupted my mistress, who seemed lost in thought. Then she turned to the woman.

"Mrs. Grey," said she, "your son should be taught to train and cultivate his voice. Rarely have I heard one so true and pure, and I know much of such matters. I am aware that placed as you are with your large family, the expenses attaching to a musical education could not be borne by you. I will take Reuben myself; will have him placed in a suitable——"

"Take Reuben?" exclaimed the mother, smoothing the corner of her apron, which until now she had held crumpled up in her hand.

Then spoke the father, who up to this moment had taken no active part in the colloquy.

"Who be ye?" he asked looking up at the Countess from under a shaggy penthouse of eyebrow as he rested from the labours of the meal, his knife and fork upturned in either hand, handle downwards upon the table.

CHAPTER II.

My mistress satisfied the parent's curiosity, bestowing upon him ample means of verifying her word, then, saying she would quit Tunbridge Wells early on Monday forenoon, the day coming, and would drive over in the morning to learn the decision regarding Reuben, to take or leave him, she directed a parting wave of her hand towards the family, and raising her glasses once more to her eyes, picked her way out of the cottage, Elfine and I following as before.

"These people are philosophical, Maisie," said she to me, as seated in the deserted kitchen the next morning we waited for Reuben, who was to accompany us straight away to London; "they know what is for their advantage. Well, well, what can you expect, though? Out of a crew of ten or twelve, one is not likely to be missed."

The father and all the rest of the family were out at their various occupations. A day's work was too valuable to be lost—nay, might not be shirked—because one member of the family was going away. But my mistress talked without book, as the saying is, when she spoke of the crew of ten or twelve, and one not being missed. She had not seen, as I had, the poor mother in the little back kitchen gripping her throat in her agony, that the great sobs might not burst forth and strike the ears of the fine good lady to whom they all should be so grateful. She did not see her as I did, both arms locked around her son, his arms, too, tightly clasped about her neck. She did not hear the broken words, "I dared not stand in thy way, Reuben lad. But, oh! don't forget us. Think of thy father and sisters, and brothers and me, and the old place; and write to me, Reuben—write to me—not seldom!" She did not feel

the honest hand-clasp of the strong, work-roughened palm, nor hear the fervent "God bless thee, mistress, for that," as, with tears in my eyes, I looked into her eyes, and as mother to mother I promised I would do my best for the boy, as in her place. She did not see all this, I say. Bah! What can you expect, though? Out of that crew of ten or twelve, thou *wert* missed, Reuben!

Well, we stepped into the carriage and drove away, the brave woman waving many a parting kiss and smiling speed-well to her son; and, directly we got to London, my duty was to take the lad to a good tailor, there to have him provided with a suitable outfit.

This was the first outward and visible change in the boy's life, which was now to undergo so complete and thorough a change outwardly and inwardly. I told you the Countess had taken his life into her own hands; you shall see how lightly she held the trust, and how tranquilly. The trust? Aye, and I think it was a trust.

Reuben was now sent into the nursery to me and my child, and we were told that we might amuse him as we pleased when my lady did not want him; above all, that we were to smooth away those roughnesses of speech and manner which, though they brought a smile sometimes to her face, caused an ominous wrinkle to gather over the fair forehead of the Countess upon other occasions.

Elfine took the smoothing process into her own hands, and wonderfully well and quickly she succeeded with her pupil. He was apt and willing, and he had an innate love for all that was refined and beautiful, else would he have chosen the *Te Deum*, with variations, rather than the simple, sweet old hymn tune, when my lady bade him sing. The first thing Elfine changed for him was his name.

"What shall I call you, boy?" she asked, in her winning way, as together they sat at the window, watching the never-ceasing traffic of the street beneath. "Reuben isn't

pretty enough, at least not pretty enough for me."

Passing her little hand over the marble smoothness of her brow, as if the effort of thought required help, she considered for a moment. "I have it," she then said, "You are to be Ruby." And Ruby he was from that hour.

I do not doubt that my mistress had a scheme for the lad's education, nor do I doubt that looking at it merely as a scheme, it was as good as it possibly could be. You, the public who will read this, should bear me out here, for you have heard the result in the astonishing beauty of your favourite's voice.

Her first move was to prepare his mind for a reception of the teaching which was to follow, to show him what he might do and be, to incite him to emulation and ambition. To this end she took him to all the best operas and concerts that the town afforded. And she found that her protégé had a true love of music within him, the love that alone makes a real artist. She found that not only had he a pipe like a bullfinch, and an ear like a parrot, but that he had the soul of a singer in his uncouth clodhopper's body. So far so good. With her usual acumen she had been wise in her impulse. For, see you, he might have had a sweet voice and have been able to sing as he heard or was taught, but without that love and admiration for music and the musician's art, he might, instead of working hard with his lungs and brain, have been more content to delve with his hands, in which case my mistress would have had a hard bargain to drive with him. For you cannot force a parrot. It will learn no more than it choose.

These concerts and operas were the first peep that Ruby had into a world of beauty other than that every-day beauty that had surrounded him from his birth. To put the idea into different clothing they were his first peep into a world of Art. And this was a beauty that his soul leaped out to meet, with a passion of love keener from the fact that his innermost being had been barren till now

of an emotion like unto this. He gloried in the concerts, he loved the operas, nor sighed nor murmured once for the old country life that had been his.

He had found his love. He was content.

CHAPTER III.

When the London season waned, we betook ourselves to my lady's chalet on Lake Lucerne.

Here among the mountains, amidst all that is most elevated and beautiful in Nature's mood and make, Ruby once again found his heart's delight.

There had been three unsuspected voids in his simple nature waiting to be filled. I have shown you one; I have shown you two; the first the void of his musical soul, satisfied so completely by the operas and concerts; the second the void of his beauty-loving spirit satisfied by Switzerland. The third had not yet declared itself, but you shall know it soon, and it will contain the very gist of my tale.

The days and weeks that we spent in that mountain home soon magnified into months, until the chilliness of autumnal breezes reminded the Countess that Paris awaited her.

Ruby had now passed his sixteenth birthday, and my little Elfine was fast nearing the completion of her twelfth year.

In all the places of our sojourn the child had special instructors, male and female, as well as the two or three governesses who always attended her wherever we went. They did their utmost to make her as learned a little woman as you would wish to see; it was to their credit that Mademoiselle should do them justice—she—the only daughter of the wealthy and influential Comtesse de Loignan.

But as far as I was concerned, Elfine was ever my own sweet baby, perfectly free from any trace of vanity; as simple-minded, as true-hearted, and as leal as my dead infant Dugald would have been had he lived. I saw

no difference in her, bless her, with all her grand accomplishments. She was Elfine, never Mademoiselle to me.

But with Ruby it was different. He must go away for his instruction to an Italian town, where, so my mistress had arranged, he should be taught his art.

He bade us all farewell with a grave earnestness of demeanour as if he knew and understood the solemnity of his mission, the training of the talent he possessed. For three years he studied under the clever men to whom my mistress had sent him. Once or twice a year he joined us at the house or hotel we for the time inhabited, in order that the Countess might hear and judge for herself of the progress he made. On every occasion she expressed herself satisfied. She had been right in her first impulse. Ruby was a singer.

As for Elfine she was as ever the youth's faithful friend, wandering with him in the woods, playing little accompaniments for him, ministering to his boyish wants and whims in all ways. She was the dear little Elfine of old, who had corrected his roughness, smoothed away his awkwardness, and laid the first seeds of that exquisite refinement of manner which you, oh, hardly-pleased world, have found so worthy of praise and credit in him.

I remember well the first time he sang in public. It was at an afternoon service at St. Peter's in Rome, in which my mistress had permitted him to take part to the extent of one solo in the oratorio "Elijah," so that she and others present might judge how he acquitted himself.

Elfine and I proceeded together to the cathedral, joining the Countess in the seats reserved for our use. We did not know what solo Ruby was to sing, but were to squeeze each other's hands when we guessed we heard his voice. That was a preconceived arrangement made by Ruby.

How could you fail to recognise his voice, you probably will ask, when all the time he was before you plain to view?

Know then, if you are not already aware of it, that in these Romish places of worship the singers are hidden in a kind of sunken well in the singers' gallery, so that you perceive our plan was not without merit.

That Sunday afternoon in January was the very first time I had ever entered a Roman Catholic church, nor was it without qualms that I did so. I thought, however, that I might be forgiven, seeing how pious was the piece to be performed, and that our boy was to sing in it.

I took his advice upon the subject beforehand, moreover, holding that young minds often come to a wise determination in deciding between right and wrong, and he too, concluded that I might go. Determined not to let my eyes wander over the building when I entered, but just to follow my charge to the chapel where the service was to be held, listen with closed eyes and devout thoughts, and depart again directly all was over, I walked by her side. But oh! when I found myself within that magnificent structure my stern resolve took instant flight, showing how easy it is to take, how difficult to keep a vow.

After the first glimpse I gave at it I could not restrain myself from scanning eagerly the elegant proportions of this enormous fane, its vast aisles, great pillars, and grand architectural beauties. Nay, would I have lingered, only Elfine's little hand dragged me along, and I found myself in a side chapel, itself as large as many an ordinary church. I recollect then that I came to this conclusion, that in every temple dedicated to God, there God is, nor have I ever since demurred as to the propriety of my entering a Romish place of worship. The chapel, which, excepting at the altar, where many candles blazed, was dimly lighted, was crowded to excess. Rows upon rows of worshippers occupied the rush-bottomed chairs, and in the gloom looked like ancient mummies in their grim cerements. Here and there only was the strange resemblance checked, as a diamond sparkled out of the darkness, or a ruby tinted ray of

light played upon an upturned face. High up the vaulted ceiling, touched here and there with a rosy gleam, penetrated to enormous and mysterious regions of blackness farther than eye could fathom. It was a wondrous sight, all so beautiful and grand that, I thought even to sit there a service of praise. But the priests came next in gorgeous robes, followed by tiny boys with vessels of incense, which shed abroad subtle delicious perfumes over the congregation, the while the invisible choir chanted low sweet music, and tears came to my eyes for very wonder at so much loveliness, and I thought if our own kirk services were as beautiful they would surely draw more souls to the fold. So exalted did I feel that I imagined all present would be the same. I did not then reflect that many came merely for the music and the pretty sights.

At any rate, they would not attend kirk for these.

"Finest voice in Europe—splendid range—perfect quality. Only a poor English ploughboy I am told—and this his first appearance in public. Won't be left to waste his sweetness long—eh? Yes. Tonley is here, came all the way from town without stopping *en route*. Knew of the lad for years—wants to be first in the field."

These were the sentences I heard pronounced by some English and American worshippers near to me, whose conversation I thought most unbecoming in that sacred edifice. For some time it did not occur to me of whom they spoke, until "ploughboy" caught my ears, a statement which I should have contradicted, had I not recognised that of which they apparently had lost sight, namely, that conversation in church is very wrong. But here I can correct the error. Ruby never was a ploughboy, at any rate not taking the calling to mean anything contemptible. My anger was diverted, however, for then the organ began, and all I had to do was to think of when I should squeeze Elfine's hand. Before we came I had been sure I should recognise his voice among a thousand, but now in those surroundings I

almost doubted my own discrimination, and had made up my mind when one chorus, a duet, and a second chorus had been performed that I would leave Elfine to press mine, knowing well how sad I should feel to press wrongly, and yet thinking myself too confused to keep my usual wits about me; when suddenly we gripped each other simultaneously and without the slightest hesitation at the sound of Ruby's voice.

Now what words have I to express the pure beauty of it, as it rose in the severe notes of what I afterwards learned was called the recitative? Nay, have I none—but surely was there a sinner present understanding the Latin tongue in which the lad sang, he *must* have been touched by the passionate pleading of the words that followed, in which all the coldness, all the harshness of the recitative was gone, and hope, gentleness, and mercy only were disclosed.

I have heard him sing since before the foot-lights in the finest operas ever put upon the stage—yes, even have I entered a theatre—and have listened to him in many another oratorio. But never, never has he excelled that first time, though with years his voice became fuller and more matured. Many a choked half-stifled sob testified to the impression his rendering of that mighty music made upon some worshipper who, likely enough, did not know he had come to hear an artiste, and recognised only a boy's pure voice.

For the rest, "He'll do—he is divine," I heard members of the English and American party say: next, "Ah! Tonley is going; good-bye—we meet again at the Costanzi:" and then they pushed their way out of the chapel, joining several others at the door, so that when all were gone the congregation was appreciably smaller.

We waited until the end of the service, and then drove home quickly.

Ruby was there before us. We found him crouching in a corner of the room called Elfine's nursery, his head buried in his arms, sobbing wildly, so that each sob shook him from head to foot.

I ran towards him quickly, and put my arms around him. "My bairn," I said. "Ah! don't cry so; thou didst do well, my man: no one shall say thou didst not sing thy best."

But Elfine came between us.

"Hush! Maisie," whispered she. "He is not crying for that; these are tears of joy." And then she raised his head until it rested on her shoulder. And we all cried quietly together, kissing one another for very joy and thankfulness, and for love one of another.

[To be concluded.]

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM.

ON INTERVIEWING.

A BEGINNER in journalism suggested to me the other day that interviewing was, perhaps, the one branch of newspaper work in which the subject was more important than the treatment. An interview with a new celebrity, she pointed out, provided it was first in the field or contained information which other interviews did not give, would be read eagerly by the public for the sake of the information it contained, even if it were in itself dull and ill written.

At the first thought one would be inclined to agree to this, at the second one would hesitate. After all there are very few people in whom the public is really interested. As often as not an interview must be written to excite, rather than to satisfy the curiosity of the public, or at the least to persuade the public that it ought to be interested in the person presented to it. The reason of this is obvious. There are never more than some half-a-dozen people in whom the public is interested at the same time; rarely so many, generally, indeed, but one "The Comet of a Season." Any girl could pick out the one man of last year in whom interest centred. Any girl could tell who was "the man of the moment" now at the time of writing, but very possibly before this article reaches the hands

of our subscribers, there will be another man, or perhaps woman, but it is improbable that there will be more than one.

Of course, if anyone had timely or exclusive information to give to the public regarding "the man," or "woman of the moment," she might write it indifferently and yet command her own price for it, but with the average subject it is another matter; the article must be of interest in itself. It must be better than other articles sent in, either because it is written round a subject capable of picturesque treatment, or because it is in itself pleasing.

I am referring, of course, to the work of beginners who are not on the staff of any paper, but who want to get on the staff of one, or at least to get in the thin end of the wedge by becoming an occasional contributor. A girl who knows any author, or artist, or musician of any note, or who has a friend who knows one, has an excellent opportunity. Many an author who objects to being interviewed as a rule will be willing to give an opportunity to a young friend, in memory of the time when he or she was "a beginner." The would be interviewer has only to write her article and then send it to one paper after another until it is accepted. A girl who knows no one of any interest, nor has no friend who knows one, will have more trouble. Most "celebrities" are busy people, and though they might be quite willing for an interview to appear because the advertisement they received thereby would be beneficial to them, would not care to make the necessary sacrifice of time for the writing of an interview which might never be published. The best thing then for the girl who knows nobody to do, is to first decide on some distinguished person in whom she feels interest, and could therefore hope to interest others, and then write a brief and very legible note to some half-a-dozen editors asking if they would take an interview on such and such a person provided they found it suitable. If the first half-dozen editors reply in the negative, or

not at all, let her write to half-a-dozen more, choosing papers which publish occasional interviews rather than those which make a special feature of a series, as these latter are sure to have a regular interviewer on the staff. Sooner or later she is sure to be told by some editor that she may send in the article. Then she must write at once to the celebrity she has chosen asking leave to interview him, or her, for that particular paper.

If permission is refused, I am afraid she will have to begin all over again, but the aspirant in journalism must be prepared for a few disappointments in the beginning.

However, unless she has been so unfortunate as to pitch upon one of the very few people who will never consent to be interviewed, the chances are that permission will be accorded more or less graciously, more if the person is a really great man or woman, less if he or she is merely a temporary success, whose head is turned for the moment, and will be forgotten next year.

But however the permission is given, I take it the beginner will rejoice; a little too soon, alas, for her troubles are not over; they are only just beginning. She must go to the house of the "celebrity" punctually at the appointed time. If she feels shy, she must remember that it is just possible the celebrity will be shy; there are many people who feel as uncomfortable at the sight of a note book and pencil as if they were in the witness box, so keep the pencil and paper rigidly out of sight. There is no harm in saying "would you mind my writing that down" if you are told something difficult to remember, but that must not be till quite late in the interview, when your subject has got used to you and your errand. If your subject is not shy let her or him talk; ask questions only when you are not quite sure of the meaning of what you hear, and when you go home write down what you have heard word for word. Then go over it carefully, for it is sure to be too long. Consider if what the public is likely to want to know and what

the subject is anxious to have published are in fair proportions, and cross out whichever is in excess. Cross out, too, as many of the I's as possible, because though it was necessary that your subject should use them, when telling you what you wanted to know, in print, they will give an impression of tedious egotism; then re-copy your article and read it over. You will probably find it interesting because it is genuine. The best and most successful interviewer I know almost invariably does his work in this manner.

I said "word for word" just now; it is necessary to be extremely careful in this respect. Some time since I read an "interview" on an authoress whose work I admired, which showed her so pedantic, affected, and egotistical that I had no wish whatever to meet her. She seemed to attach an absurd importance to the trivial details of her life. Almost immediately afterwards I did meet her, and found her charmingly natural and lighthearted. In the course of conversation, she told me, laughing, of some absurd incident that had taken place in her life. I recognised it in a moment as one of those pompously given in the interview. The interviewer had not thought this pleasant lady's everyday, easy speech good enough for print, and had changed all her little everyday words for polysyllables, and the result was a libel.

The great fault to be avoided is cheap smartness. Don't force yourself on your readers at the expense of your subject, your readers will have a much higher opinion of your cleverness if you interest them in it than if you try to be "smart" on your own account. If you seem for a moment to be showing disrespect to the person who has accorded you an interview, your readers will either follow your lead, and treat your subject with indifference, in which case you fail as an interviewer, or they will set you down as an extremely ill-bred person, who is abusing the hospitality of some one who has done you a favour.

Mind you, the favour may really be on the

other side. Your subject, instead of being one of the few in whom the public is really interested, may be one whom you are practically introducing to it, but unless you assume that the public is interested, you have no excuse for writing the interview, and unless you can convince your readers that they want to know what you have to tell, you will hardly succeed as an interviewer, and you will not do this by slighting your subject. This is perhaps the great fault of American journalism, but it is gaining ground so fast here that it is well to warn beginners against it.

Another fault to be guarded against is overpraise. Human beings are, as a rule, extremely contradictory. Monotonous praise inspires dislike. A few emphatic words here and there, if you really mean them, will improve your article, but a general tone of praise makes it tedious. Of course, an interview is no place for adverse criticism. Your business is to describe, not judge, but the few words of praise are allowed, on the assumption that if the person interviewed were not exceptionally remarkable, you would not be writing the interview.

Above all, you must avoid overpraise in that first experimental interview, or the editor will think you are "advertising your personal friend," and promptly return your "copy."

SONNET.

As rich am I as though some fairy dower
Of magic carpet, or enchanted ring,
Were mine, that with a wish, a touch, might wing
Me where I would. For when too darkly lower
Those thunderclouds that threaten sunniest hour—
Too closely crowds the streets' loud trafficking—
Straightway I fly where giant beeches fling
Their dappled shade, and lordly firs up-tower,
And myriad leaves make drowsy melody;
Or haply where the wild wind-armies sweep
Across the moorland's purple loneliness;
Yet is my flight but pleasant fantasy.

So joys long-vanished are not lost, but sleep,
And fairies grant more gifts than mortals guess.

HELEN OUSTON.



"I HAVE got one of the new coats," said the girl of three seasons, doubtfully, "and I am not sure if I like myself in it, so if you are kind you will all praise it."

"Let us consider it judicially first" said the bride. "It is a compromise between an Eton jacket and a cape. The wing sleeves give you the width across the shoulders of the cape, and the jacket part gives you a tailor-made slimness of waist. Yes! I like it! and the colour—green, is very becoming to you."

"I am so glad green is being worn this spring," said Cousin May, "for it is a colour becoming to everyone."

"Yes! green used to be thought 'trying' in my young days," said the chaperon, "but that was because there were so few shades of it, and those few so staring; now-a-days the shades are so various, and so delicate, that anyone, whatever their complexion, can find one to suit them. Your new demi-toilette is to be green and white, isn't it Lily? An excellent combination for a debutante; it suggests a snowdrop."

"Yes! but it is to have close fitting sleeves," said the debutante regretfully; "it must, because they are the very latest thing, and I shall feel so insignificant without puffed shoulders. Somehow, my big sleeves always used to give me confidence going into a room. I shall feel more nervous than ever when I creep in—a little narrow thing without them."

"It is a pity," said the chaperon, "there is no question that the great fault of most women's figures is the narrowness of the shoulders as compared with the width of the hips, but fortunately fashion is not so arbitrary but what narrow-shouldered women

may still have puffs or bows at the shoulder of their tight sleeves for a little while; at least, until the eye has grown used to the undisguised narrowness, and does not resent it."

"What a pity people don't think of that," said the bride. "I saw a charming girl the other day, who was so anxious to emphasise the fact that she was one of the first to wear absolutely tight-fitting sleeves, that she wore with them a little bolero cut very narrow on the shoulders, and one of the narrowest of the narrow waist-bands now in vogue, and the result was that her back looked perfectly round, her shoulders narrowing in to her neck, and her full blouse into the waist-belt; the effect was very ungraceful."

"I should advise Lily to have big green bows drooping over her shoulders, back and front," said cousin May, "she is so young that they will only seem prettily childish, and the arms in clear transparent sleeves will peep out prettily from underneath them."

"Tea gowns are going out, and that is a great grief to me," said the bride, "they were so comfortable and so picturesque. I suppose that now we have the 'Venus waist'—that is to say a waist some three inches larger than whatever was your size last year—there is no longer any need to take off one's corsets to be comfortable."

"And do you notice," said the girl of three seasons, "how completely dependent on habit the eye is; if one goes into a room full of smart people where every one's waist is considerably larger than it was last year, one scarcely notices any change, but let some person come in with a last year's waist, and we find ourselves disliking and condemning

her appearance. I will own I was not quite quick enough in changing mine. Last year I used to laugh at Nellie Marsden's twenty-four inch waist-band. At Lady Leigh's a few weeks ago, I met her with the same waist, and she looked 'right' and I did not. I felt wrong all the afternoon, but by the evening I had had a bodice 'adapted' and felt presentable."

"Nellie wore a lovely blouse the other day," said the engaged girl. "I got behind her and took notes of it. It was made of strips of guipure lace, cream on black ground sewn together and gathered into a jet girdle, the sleeves—tight fitting—had little puffs of chiffon fitted in wherever the shape of the arm needed a little extra room, the hat worn with it was a sort of fluffy toque of black chiffon, with an aigrette of cream ostrich tips and cream pearls. The skirt was of black grass lawn over cream satin: I never saw anything more *chic*."

"How frivolous we are getting," said the chaperon, "to change the subject, how many of you are collecting for the Shilling Hospital Fund."

The debutante and the bride were collecting; Cousin May looked dubious.

"I always do all my collecting for the Free Samaritan Hospital in the Marylebone Road," she said, "because it admits anyone who is poor and ill without any letter of recommendation, and because it does not overwork its nurses. It always seems to me such a sad thing in connection with most hospitals, that the young girls who spend their time curing the sick should lead such hard and pleasureless lives. We all have a right to a certain amount of pleasure in our lives, and yet many people write and talk of nurses as if one had a right to exact martyrdom from them. As if the desire to go to a dance, or a concert, or to have a lover, natural enough in any other girl, were a special sin in a nurse."

"I never thought of that," said the bride, "one gets one's idea of a nurse from fiction, when she is generally some one with a

broken heart, trying to forget her troubles in ministering to others, and the happier the harder she is worked. After all, the average nurse is only a young girl earning her living in a very arduous and difficult calling. No one ever objects to doctors having a good time if they do not neglect their duties for it, but the poor nurses are, when one thinks of it, expected to devote their entire lives to their work. They have often less leisure than servants, though their work is infinitely harder, and makes a need of change and rest more urgent. Are the nurses at the Free Samaritan really treated more reasonably?"

"They have to work hard enough," said May, "but they are treated as young folks should be, with a certain kindness, and sympathy, and the result is, according to the doctors, that though there is rarely a case of any of them breaking down through overwork, there is no hospital where the nurses do their work more thoroughly, or where the patients are better cared for, and retain such pleasant memories of the time spent in its wards."

"Well, I will give you something special for the Free Samaritan Hospital," said the chaperon, "but I shall give to the others for the general fund too, and I hope, out of all this great sum of money collected for the purpose of making sick folks well, a little may be spared for the purpose of preserving the health of the nurses."

THE Association for the Education of Women in Oxford has formally recognised a new Hall for women students, and admitted it to representation on its Council for a period of five years. Three years ago Miss Beale, principal of the Cheltenham Ladies' College, opened a house intended principally, though not exclusively, for students from her own school, and she has recently made arrangements for its incorporation under the title of St. Hilda's Hall.

WITH the lengthening days of spring and the promise of warm, balmy air and April's vernal showers, the thought naturally comes uppermost in our minds of our garden, and the preparation wanted that it may be decked with beauty to greet the

BROWN OWL.

glowing summer. The old adage is certainly a true one

"March winds and April showers,

Bring forth May flowers."

and now is the time to plant the seeds.

One of the first things to begin with, before doing so, is to see that the soil is good. In old gardens, in town especially, where vegetation has only a lingering existence in black, sour and exhausted mould, it becomes necessary to remove the soil to a depth of about eighteen inches and replace it with good loam from the country. The top should be of a half-clayey pasture, as it contains a great quantity of vegetable matter, which nourishes the roots of plants, and its purity enables it to absorb smoke and dust for several years before losing its good quality.

For borders I think the old-fashioned English flowers are best. Cloves, hollyhocks, lychnis, aconites, lupins, peonies, etc., and many of them will thrive in the worst air and very indifferent soil. Herbaceous border flowers differ from the bedders in the comparatively short space in which they keep in bloom, and as the blooming season of the herbaceous kinds vary very much, by judicious management of them in borders, a constant succession of bloom may be attained from very early spring until the advent of the frost.

For town gardens the Marvel of Peru is an excellent flower, only it will not bear the shade of trees or high walls. Where the soil is good set the roots at least two feet apart; plant them in April just deep enough to cover the crown, and should the shoots appear before morning frosts are over, throw a little earth over them, for protection. The flowers vary in colour, but are mostly pink and white, and grow in immense clusters over the whole of the plant. Another good border flower is the pretty *Saponaria calabrica*, which produces a close mass of bright pink blossoms till nearly Christmas, and is very hardy, also the "Tom Thumb" nasturtium, which should be sown in April and thinned to one foot apart. It forms a dense tuft, covered with a profusion of scarlet flowers.

Stocks may be sown in the open ground in April and May, but the seedlings should be transplanted to give them a check. By starving the young plants till the foliage turns yellow and then giving them liberal culture, you will get a good proportion of double flowers. Seedlings of Canterbury bells should be planted out in April, but if you want to get strong plants for next season sow some seeds in sheltered spots at the same time. Common garden soil does very well for them, and all the varieties are hardy. Wallflower is always welcome by reason of its early bloom, and it thrives well in town, provided it has plenty of light and sunshine.

The dark red is very fine, also the blue *C. caruleus*, which has fine double flowers, and all the German varieties are good.

Just a few words on the purchase of seeds. It is no more trouble to grow flowers from good seed, and far better and more satisfactory in the end. The seeds sold at small shops and corn-chandlers are pretty nearly worthless, and good flowers cannot be obtained from them. The plants for seed are always picked with great care, and the best flowers produce the least seed. Get your seed from a first-rate house, sow them separate as received, with tallies to distinguish them, and you will not be in a quandary as to what the tints will be. It is not as a rule worth while to save seed of your own growing, and above all avoid the "penny packet," for though you sow in hope, in nine cases out of ten you reap disappointment.

The following lines, so successfully pieced together from the works of the poets, gained the prize in a recent competition:—

SPRING.

In goodly colours, gloriously arrayed, (*Spenser*)
New drest, and blooming as a bridal maid, (*Harte*)
Fair-handed Spring unbosoms every grace,

(*Thomson*)

The tender vision of her lovely face, (*Longfellow*)
Then sing ye birds—sing, sing a joyous song—

(*Wordsworth*)

That soar on Morning's wing, the vales among,

(*Coleridge*)

To rocks, to springs, to rills, from leafy bowers

(*Drummond*)

Of sylvan England, green with frequent showers,

(*Trench*)

And call the vales, and bid them hither cast (*Milton*)

About the mouldered lodges of the past (*Tennyson*)

The odorous purple of a new-born rose, (*Byron*)

Soft as the fleeces of descending snows; (*Pope*)

That memory, the warder of the brain (*Shakespeare*)

(Laid pausefully upon Life's headlong train) (*Matthew Arnold*)

Seeking among the shadows that pass by, (*Shelley*)

Brings colours dipp'd in Heaven that never die,

(*Cowper*)

O Maker of the poet's dear delight (*Keats*)

Pour round her path a ray of living light; (*Rogers*)

Yet o'er her lovely hopes that once were dear

(*Campbell*)

My heart goes out a-Maying all the year. (*Kingsley*)

MARGARET AGNETA HARRINGTON.

A TALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

ARE MEN DEGENERATING?

THE young man of the present day is doing his utmost to prove the affirmative, but despite his efforts, it is possible to trace beneath his inane artificiality, his shallow cynicism, his real and affected scepticism, germs of a manly courage, an innate chivalry, an incipient reverence for truth and purity, which will astonish no one more than himself, if allowed to emerge from the folds of *blasé* indifference in which he smothers them. The folds are the fancy dress of youth. The full-grown nineteenth-century man is a product for which no country or age need blush. Education is infusing into the weakened and effete ranks of the old aristocracy a sturdier strain from the middle classes, men whose harder physique is endued with that energy and taste for work which is a potent factor towards mental and moral improvement. Men of the lower classes also are awakening to a sense of their intellectual and national responsibilities. They appreciate keenly the facilities for development which assuredly tend to progression. Increasing knowledge brings increased self-control, the lack of which over passions and appetite was surely more apparent in former generations than the present. It is true that though men are losing brutality and gaining philanthropy, they are also losing the politeness and courtesy, especially towards women, which distinguished our grandfathers. Is this entirely their fault? No! It is a credit to the modern man that in spite of the modern woman, he has not degenerated.

NINA A. DUTTON.

THE subject for debate this month is a difficult one. One learned writer tells us, that man's tendency is to degenerate. But how reconcile this with the theory of evolution? The human race has made many forward and retrograde movements in the course of ages, but carefully compare nation with nation, and class with class, and the only inference that can be drawn is, that the whole of mankind is in a progressive state; hence it follows, that men, as part of the great earth family, must also be advancing to a higher, healthier condition. If we glance at the Europe of two hundred years ago and compare the many classes of each great nation with their descendants of to-day, could even a pessimist deny, that among them there is a mighty army whose watchword is *excelsior*? The cultured classes have increased opportunity for culture; the middle classes have advanced by leaps and bounds; the artisan has privileges that were undreamed of by his earlier predecessors, and even the very dregs of society are being cared for; this proves that men are more conscious of their responsibilities, and are nobly discharging them. The development of science with the treasures of literature and art disseminated broad-cast have tended to elevate and strengthen men's minds; naturally progress must follow. Men's minds demand occupation, and the nineteenth century has

supplied it in a thousand interesting ways. With legitimate employment, retrogression is almost impossible, and if the race advances, the individual must necessarily advance also; therefore, men are progressing, not degenerating.

LUCY LAKER.

THE question is not an easy one to decide, suddenly and finally. In these days, as of old, we meet all types of men, strong and weak, noble and vicious, all helping to form the great whole that we call mankind. But in one respect, it is safe to affirm that men *are* degenerating, in the matter of common politeness. We all know Tennyson's views on the subject:—"Manners are not idle, but the fruit of loyal nature and of noble mind." If we admit them, then this age must be lacking in true nobility within, as well as in the outward shibboleth of courtesy. It must be allowed that women have partly themselves to blame for this, but it is hard that the whole sex should suffer for the faults of a class neither large nor popular. For many a woman is still left who appreciates and values little services rendered by men, not because she is incapable of performing them, but because it is her natural right in her "woman's kingdom," to be thus helped and guarded. But in integrity, honour, and in times of necessity, true courage and steadfastness, to-day as of old, men are not found wanting. We know it by the heroic records of our battlefields, by explorers' narratives, and last, but not least, by many an unwritten deed that may only find its reward when the meaning of this life is made clear.

ETHEL B. COLLINS.

THAT the human race on the whole progresses, I have no doubt. As Christian civilisation reaches a higher level than Greek, so we may hope that of the future will excel ours. But the progress is not continuous, and at the present day men *are* degenerating, because the highest civilisation in the world, the European, is in its decline. We are degenerating *physically*: partly, it may be, because improved medical science lets weaklings live, but chiefly not from any accidental cause, simply that the stamina of the race grows weaker. Few of us could stand the physical conditions under which our ancestors flourished. The increase of luxury, an invariable accompaniment of degeneration, is a fact none can deny, as its progress at the present time is startlingly rapid. We are degenerating *morally*. Possibly, owing to physical decay, brutal vices are on the decrease, but men tempted to evil of any kind have less principle, less certainty of what is right, to restrain them from indulging in it. There is now no sin, no folly, but can defend itself behind some sophism. The decline of religion is a witness of moral decay. We have the same creed that has served for nearly 1900 years, but how small its power compared with that which in times past it exercised over the minds and lives of men! O, intellectual degeneration I have no space left to speak, but the present state of art and literature speaks for itself.

"MATELDA."

ATALANTA CLUB.

Subject for February: "Is it ever permissible for a woman to make a proposal of marriage?" Papers must not exceed *two hundred and fifty words*, and must be sent in on or before April 25th. Prizes of five shillings will be awarded to each of the four best papers, which will be published in the body of the Magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

Describe the termination of an engagement between two lovers. Analyse the character of Madame de Staël. Write an original Rondeau Redoublé (example given in this issue). Essays must not exceed 500 words. The subject for the School of Journalism will be an interview with a person accessible to the writer, and not necessarily of public note, setting forth the subject's views and career. All papers must be sent in on or before April 25th. Members may only enter for one of these subjects. Full rules for the above will be found among the advertising pages at the end of this number.

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (MARCH).

I.

1. Angus Og. 2. Means "countenance - behaviour." 3. Became obsolete soon after the time of the Earl of Surrey.

II.

1. Melaia (Eliza Cook). 2. Old Cries (Eliza Cook).

III.

1. From the game "Paille Maille," played with a species of bowls and a mallet. Charles II. was passionately fond of it. 2. Waller.

IV.

1. "In praise of Melancholy," from Beaumont and Fletcher.
2. "Death's final Conquest," James Shirley.
3. "Unclose those eyelids," Henry Glassthorne.

V.

1. The Indians of Bengal and the coast of Malabar bring cages filled with birds to the graves of their friends, over which they set the birds at liberty.

2. The native Brazilians pay great attention to a certain bird that sings mournfully in the night time. They say it brings them news from friends and relations in the other world.

VI.

1. "Daphne's wedding day," Thomas Morley.
2. "Send home my long-stray'd eyes to me," John Dowie.
3. "Do you not know," Thomas Morley.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR APRIL.

I.

1. Who are meant by the term "Book-a-bosom priests"?
2. What is meant by "St. Cuthbert's beads"?

II.

1. Who was the true writer of the verses, "An essay on satire," in 1679.
2. To whom at the time were they attributed?
3. Which poet is spoken of in these lines -
"Though praised and beaten for another's rhymes,
His own deserve as great applause sometimes"?

III.

Give authors of quotations—

1. "What if a certain soul,
Which early slipped its sheath,
And has for its home the whole
Of heaven, thus look beneath,"
"A child, with mystic eyes and flowing hair,
I saw her first, 'mid flowers that shared her
grace;
Though but a boy, I cried, 'How fair a face!'"

IV.

1. Explain what is meant by the *Oton-tala*, or *Sea of Stars*?
2. Of what material is the *Kolah*, or cap worn by the Persians, made?

V.

Give authors of quotations—

1. "My days have been so wondrous free,
The little birds, that fly
With careless ease from tree to tree,
Were but as blessed as I."
2. "For I am tied to very thee,
By every thought I have;
Thy face I only came to see,
Thy heart I only crave."
3. "Innocent child and snow-white flower,
Well are ye paired in your opening hour,
Thus should the pure and the lovely meet,
Stainless with stainless, and sweet with sweet."

VI.

Put concluding lines to these verses—

1. "Who could have thought such darkness lay
concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun! or who could find,
Whilst flow'r and leaf and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us
blind!"
2. "Pass on young stream, the world has need of
thee;
Far hence a mighty river on its breast
Bears the deep-laden vessels to the sea,"



S PRING AND THE LOVER.

Oh, woe is me that my love is dead!
And Spring comes here,
With may-crowned head,
To mock my grief,
With dancing leaf,
And all the joy of the year!

Oh, love, my sweet, but the light has flown,
And the days are long!
For me alone
Is no sweet note
In the throstle's throat,
Or the jocund skylark's song.

Oh, love, my sweet, how the heartless Spring
Mocks me with bird,
And flutter of wing,
And song, and scent,
And branches bent,
And sleeping memories stirred!

"Say not I mock, you foolish swain!
Do I not bring
Your love again?
See at your feet
All that was sweet,
That else had taken wing!

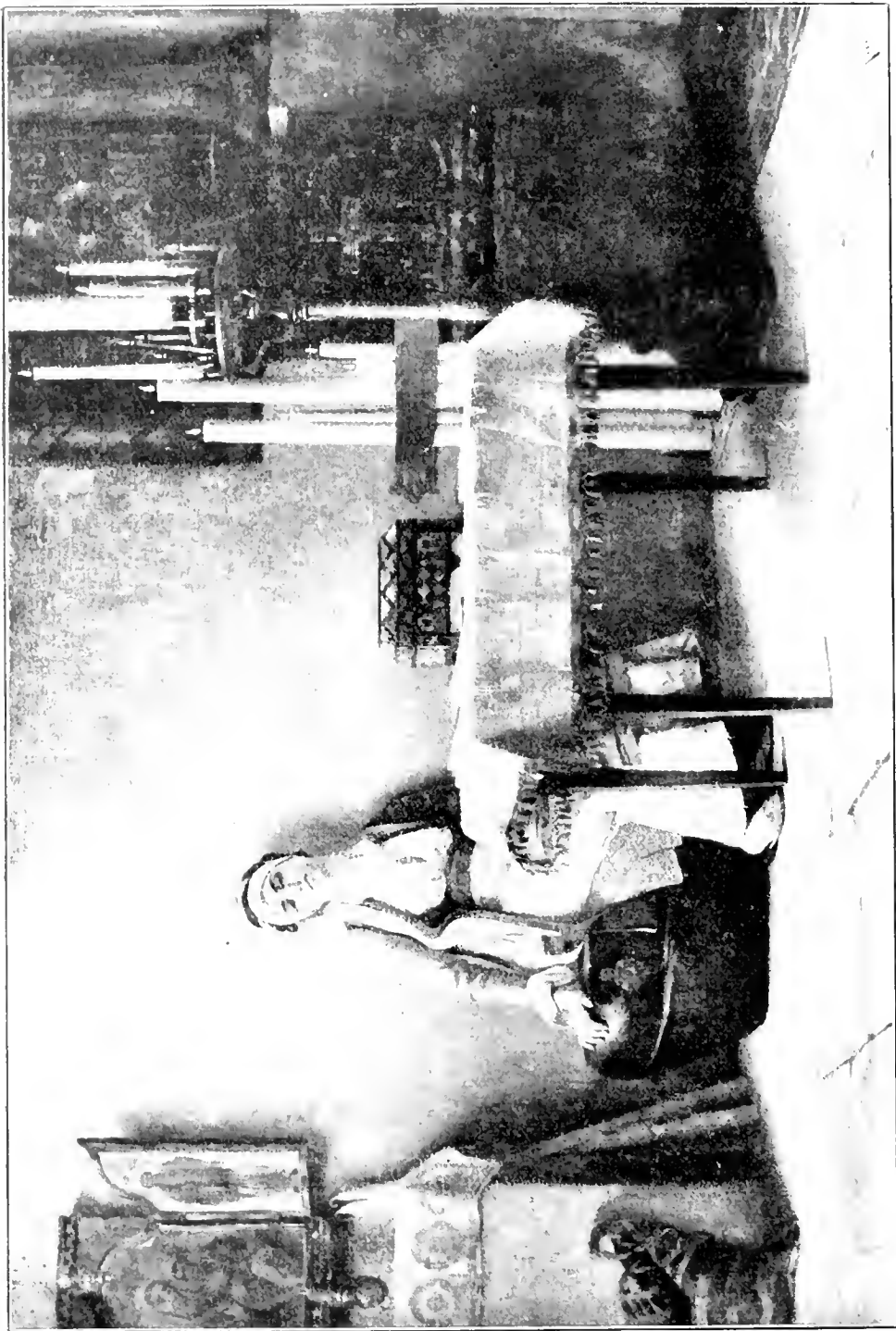
"I stole the gold of her sunny hair
For the daffodils,
And her whiteness rare
On the pear-tree lies,
And the glint of her eyes
Is spent upon the rills.

"And her spirit sweet is the violet,
And the apple-flower
(When dew lies wet)
Has won the rose
That comes and goes
With her fleeting blushes' dower.

"Her voice I gave to the sighing breeze,
And her bending grace
To the willow trees,
And the harebell blue
Has her sweet eyes' hue,
And the sky her changing face.

"Grieve not your heart, O lover fond,
For, till you meet
In the far Beyond,
Each year for you,
Spring will renew
All you have held most sweet!"

RACHEL S. MACNAMARA.



SWEETHEARTS AND FRIENDS.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "THE SILENCE OF DEAN
MAITLAND."

"For is it a grief to you that I have part,
Being woman merely, in your male might and deeds
Done by main strength? Yet in my body is
throned
As great a heart and in my spirit, O men,
I have not less of godlike . . ."

ATALANTA in *Calydon*.

CHAPTER I.

ONE of the most unpromising places for a pilgrim in search of the beautiful is Fulham Road; yet even that sordid spot is visited by the smiles of heaven, the holy looks of stars, the fairy pageant of cloudland. And facing westwards, a turn in this dingy street to the right offers a vista ending in a gray and graceful spire, supported by angels' outspread pinions, rising above green billows of trees. The spire, soft and aerial in the distance, is led up to by a perspective of houses, stuccoed and unlovely, but veiled and beautified by broken rows of light-foliaged trees suggesting woodland vistas.

Very quiet is the wide, forest-like thoroughfare leading to the tree-girdled church in the square, there, instead of the rabbit with white whisking tail, the stray dog or the persecuted town cat darts across the path, or now and then a man in a polished top hat, a pair of ladies in dainty shoes pass along the pavement, an occasional carriage rolls by. In Angel Road, half-way between Fulham Road and the tree-embowered church, is a house, in whose inmates the reader is requested to take a special interest out of pure courtesy. It is number nine.

One mellow golden afternoon in October, a time when the southing sun, as if relenting in the moment of departure, turns a lingering, loving gaze backwards, the sunshine lay warm on pavement, housetop and spire,

wrapping the thin-leaved limes in golden lustre; masses of cumulous clouds rose like celestial Alps on a pale sky, their opalescent tints brightening to rose at the summits and shading imperceptibly into gray beneath their aerial bases. The golden lustre poured into number nine through a back drawing-room window, framed and half hidden by a Virginian creeper burning in autumn glory. Some acacias stood in shadow, delicate and immovable in the still air, before the front window. In this room tea was being taken by several ladies fatigued by shopping, one of whom, Mrs. Langton, was looking at a roll of shining silk that her daughter held before her critical gaze. She was the mistress of the house and mother of many daughters.

"It is too cheap. It looks well enough in this light, but hold it before the window. It won't wear," she said.

"Well," replied Georgie, "who wants it to wear? In six months it will be as antiquated as if it had come out of the ark."

"I agree with Georgie," said a young lady visitor. "I found thirteen old-fashioned costumes of mine in a closet yesterday, all new since the spring. Now what is one to do with thirteen costumes as good as new? I don't like to burn them all."

"My dear," exclaimed Mrs. Langton, "why, when I was a girl—and we had almost as much pin-money then as I have for house-keeping now—a dress lasted us, a good silk, two or three years. My daughters make their own dresses, else we could not manage."

"We like dressmaking," Georgie said, "all but Amy; she hates it."

"Poor dear Amy is such a trial," lamented her mother.

"A temper?" asked Mrs. Marshall. "A little mannish?"

"No; she is always thinking, and wanting to do something."

"Girls never talked of what they ought to do in my day," Mrs. Marshall said; "they did it."

"I used to want girls because I thought

they would give no trouble. But now—" An expressive silence veiled Mrs. Langton's grief.

"You will soon be out of your trouble," said Mrs. Marshall cheerfully. "In a couple of years they will all be married. Come, Nettie, we have another call to make. Love to naughty Amy. Good-bye."

"If Amy would but give up thinking," said her mother, examining a letter brought in response to the postman's knock, and addressed in a firm masculine hand to Miss Amy Langton. "What good can possibly come to a girl who thinks? We never thought of thinking when I was young."

"But mother dear, people were not in earnest then," said Grace, "the Church was only just awakening from her long sleep."

"I wish it had never waked," replied Mrs. Langton. "We did well enough when it was asleep. People never had any doubts then, except of course a few Atheists; there were no 'good' infidels; it is more consistent in them to be wicked. People were not ashamed of being comfortable in church. One was not expected to be jostled about in one's pew by the common people, and it was not thought so difficult to get to heaven. This thinking turns everything upside down."

"But, mamma, the Church——"

"My dear Grace, I wish you would read your Bible, mend your things, and keep up your accomplishments, instead of wanting to 'do' things. No dears, the writing is not a man's, though masculine. Your sister has no male correspondents. Where *can* Amy be?"

Naughty Amy was safe in solitude of the room she shared with Georgie, the sister who had least in common with her, reading a big book illustrated by diagrams of the human form, while she jotted notes in a manuscript volume. Hearing herself called, and Georgie's light step on the stair, she grasped ink-bottle and notebook in one hand, the big volume in the other, and fled into a closet, in which dresses hung; there she remained until

Georgie had satisfied herself that the room was empty. Then she emerged from her hiding place, looked and listened for a few minutes, stole to the bedroom door, closed it softly and sat down again to her books and notes. But alas! ink bottles cannot be carried wrong side upwards with impunity; this had discharged its contents in a black, sinuous course over notes, books, and Amy's dress, and thence, in a thin dotted line, to the closet door and back again to the table by the window.

"And such a nice clear time before me, and I might have studied my brother's skeleton!" she sighed, trying to sponge away the ink stains, in the midst of which labours came a knock at the door, and Grace entered with the thick letter.

"My dear Amy! what will mamma say? Another ink bottle upset?"

"What can I do, Grace?" she replied. "I can only read when I hide. Why waste my life helping others to waste theirs?"

"Poor little thing! I have brought you a letter, but I am afraid the letter must wait till after dinner to be read, unless the boys should be late," Grace said gently. "You will scarcely be ready in time. Get ready dear, I will manage the ink."

"The boys" were early; when the sisters went down to the drawing-room, Amy with the thick letter in her hand, they found Cecil and Julius standing on the hearthrug and a stranger sitting on the end of a couch by Mrs. Langton. Cecil was a tall, fair, handsome man of four-and-twenty, a clerk in a Government office with a conviction that the Universe was planned for his personal benefit; Julius was a merry-faced lad of twenty-one, a medical student, with none.

"My dears," said Mrs. Langton, as the stranger rose on their entrance, "You remember Mr. Lester, Vivian Lester, at Baron's Cleeve?"

They remembered him very well. The Immaculate Lester was one name by which this young man was well known to the family, "That beastly prig" another. Tall, slim,

knightly looking, with large melancholy dark eyes, more manner than is usual, and a face not devoid of intelligence, the Immaculate, with all his virtues, was not disliked even by his own sex. An only child, early left an orphan, and now at twenty-four his own master, and that of a small estate near Baron's Cleeve, Vivian Lester, of Croft Hall and the Middle Temple, was an eminently desirable acquaintance for a family of daughters.

"I remember Mr. Lester a boy on a pony at Baron's Cleeve?" Georgie replied. "Amy was a dot in pinafores."

He turned to Amy and saw an awkward, shy girl, whose tumbled dress looked as if it had been pitch-forked on her shoulders, with red, though well-formed hands, and hair that seemed as if a touch would bring it down; she had beautiful eyes of the deepest blue with long curling lashes, a firm pure tint, resolute lips, and the white even teeth of amiability and health; a face that should have been pleasing, but was not the style of countenance the Immaculate admired. There was a want of finish and repose in it, a look of expectancy and eager intelligence, that he thought unbecoming in a woman. The Immaculate's views on women were immense. Georgie was a lovely girl, with gold hair, light blue eyes, slight, rounded figure, and graceful manner. Amy keenly and critically scrutinized Lester, thinking to read his character at a glance. "A manly man," she thought, "handsome, simple-hearted and intelligent, but he evidently disapproves of and looks down upon me."

At dinner, Lester, who liked ladies to dine on air and sentiment, was surprised to hear Cecil say, when carving, "Give that to Miss Amy, there is too much for any one else"; and horrified to see that she took it with philosophic calm, and dispatched it without emotion, until Cecil laughed. "Well, Amy," he said, "I really thought that even you would have been staggered by that"; when she turned crimson and hung her head.

"You ought to be proud of her appetite," Julius said. "It indicates health; besides, she's growing. Don't mind him, my dear girl, take some more beef; it will do you good."

"My dear," Mrs. Langton began to Amy with a view to changing the subject, "I was so sorry that you were out this afternoon when the Marshalls called. Such delightful people!"

"I was not out, mother," replied Amy.

"Not out? then where were you?" Georgie laughed. "The little puss was hiding upstairs, ink and all," she said.

"I am distressed, Amy," said Mrs. Langton in a low tone and fluttering her cap strings with vexation. "That you will not see people is bad enough, but when it comes to deception——"

"Mother, it was no deception. If Georgie had found me I should have been obliged to see the Marshalls, as it was I avoided them without rudeness." The Immaculate, though much interested in Grace's conversation with Cecil and himself, heard Amy's, and it made him very sad.

When the ladies reached the drawing-room, Amy put herself in a remote corner, lighting a taper on a table near, and read the long delayed letter, which ran thus:—

Windermere, Oct., 187—.

My darling Amy,—I have the most wonderful piece of news to send you. You remember my poor grandfather's death? Well, the poor dear old man relented, and left us—Lucius and me—each £10,000. Imagine your Louie an heiress! You can guess what is going to happen now that I am free. Of course I shall carry out my long-cherished plan of studying medicine. Miss Sterne, as might have been predicted, cannot imagine how I can renounce my "beautiful calling" of teaching girls to do nothing and shut their eyes to the realities of life. Still, I renounce the only career till quite recently open to women. I must remain here till the Christmas holidays, when I shall go to town and study at the new school of medicine for

women. I shall live in apartments near. Till when — "

Amy looked up to see her brothers and the Immaculate enter, and put her half-read letter once more in her pocket, her mind full of her friend's good fortune and audacity, when an idea suddenly flushed her face crimson. Why not follow her friend's example? She had been studying anatomy with a view to making her geological studies more complete, also chemistry and physiology. Why not turn these studies to practical account? Why not become a useful member of society? Why not cut the Gordian knot by leaving that overflowing house of daughters, in which she was an anomaly and superfluity? She was so engrossed by these reflections that she did not observe the Immaculate standing patiently before her with a cup of tea.

"Oh, I beg pardon," she exclaimed, starting from her dreams, "but such a splendid idea has just come into my head."

"Can you sweeten your tea with ideas?" he asked. "That a girl should be so brusque!" he sighed.

"I could with this, it is so very sweet; but I don't like sweet tea, thanks." She looked so bright and full of pleasure that he was interested, and took a seat by her. Perhaps the blue-stocking was only an affectation; she was young.

"I wonder if you could sweeten my tea with some of that superabundant sweetness, Miss Amy," he asked, looking as beautiful as the day, while Georgie played a waltz on the piano.

"I wish I could, but perhaps you know that one man's meat is another man's poison."

"Still, some human beings have meats in common."

"I am afraid," she thought, "that you and I are not those human beings." "Oh, I say!" she cried, starting at a sudden thumping and struggling at the door. "Good gracious!" "By Jove!" cried her brothers, "What has the creature got?"

Georgie's music was silenced, the door burst open and a large retriever puppy belonging to Julius rushed in, rolling some-

thing between his forepaws heavily over the floor.

"Down, Jack, down," cried Cecil. "Drop it, sir, drop it."

A kind of bowl rolled to Cecil's feet. He picked it up with a suppressed smile and held it aloft. Amy ran forward and took it eagerly, crying in a tone partly injured, partly satisfied, "Why it's my skull! I can't think how the dog got it," she added. "I put it under my pillow myself."

"I tell you what, Amy," said Cecil angrily, "if this thing turns up any more, I'll smash it to atoms."

The Immaculate was overcome. Was this girl a Valkyr? he asked himself, as he listened to a discussion of Amy's anatomical studies with a shocked face.

"I say, Amy," said Julius, who had returned from tying up the retriever, "It's time you stowed all that nonsense of learning anatomy. As if a girl could learn anatomy."

"Why not?" she demanded, on her mettle. "I know a girl who wrote an anatomical paper for a science journal."

"Some old hag in spectacles cribbed it all out of a book."

"Twenty-four and with pretty eyes. She's coming to town to study to be a surgeon at Christmas."

"She may study," replied Julius. "There's not a professor at St. Scalpel's who hasn't sworn to give up his place before he will examine a woman."

"Amy," said Mrs. Langton, "where did you pick up this dreadful person?"

"Mother, it is Louisa Stanley."

"That English governess who has been the ruin of you?"

"She is my best friend. I like her better than anybody in the world," cried Amy.

The Immaculate was still more shocked; he raised his dark and melancholy eyes and tried to turn the subject. "Have you seen Mr. Tennyson's new drama, Mrs. Langton?" he asked.

Of course she had; a discussion on the poet arose, in which said Julius with acerbity,

"Fancy Elaine walking the hospitals!"

"Of course she would have fainted at the sight of a wounded man," returned Amy scornfully.

"N-no; she would not have fainted," said Lester, with confusion.

"Yes, it is a nice picture," Amy commented, turning to an engraving in the illustrated *Idylls*. Cecil was shewing, representing Elaine extracting the spear from Lancelot's side. "Lancelot looks so grateful. They were used to women doctors in those days."

"Rude savage times," said the Immaculate crossly, to Amy's enjoyment.

"Still the times of chivalry; of the apotheosis of woman," Grace added. "Ah! If the days of chivalry were not gone by!"

"They are not gone by," replied the Immaculate vigorously. "They will never go by, while——"

"Quixote Lester is alive and kicking," Julius put in.

The Immaculate smiled mournfully. He never resented chaff, and was capable of laughing at himself, so that his virtues were enduring.

"Ah, but chivalry is gone by, Julius," Amy said. "Sir Philip Sidney is scarcely ever seen riding in the parks now. Una never walks in Kensington Gardens with her milk-white lamb——"

"And 'the gentle lady wedded to the Moor' is too busy with anatomy to listen to Othello's stirring tales," added Lester.

"Hear! hear!" cried Cecil. "Look here, Lester, you know what everybody ought to be and do. Let us have your ideal of a woman."

"Drive on, old chap," added Julius. "A being——"

"With a big B," Georgie put in, "and no views——"

"Miss Grace will tell us," said the Immaculate with his accustomed gallantry. "Those who live ideals can best paint them."

"Mr. Lester!" cried Grace, crimson. "How can you? I can't!"

"Well," began Lester. "The ideal woman is a being—whose weakness is her strength, in whom feeling replaces intellect, meekness and refinement power, who should be a rest to her husband by her freedom from toil, a strength to him by the appeal of her weakness, a joy to him by her freedom from sorrow."

"And have no relations, no pity, and ten thousand a year," added Amy with a derisive laugh, shared by Georgie.

"And only speak when spoken to," added Cecil severely. "Well done, Lester!"

"Thank you, Mr. Lester," said Mrs. Langton. "Nothing can be juster or more desirable than the picture you have drawn of an ideal woman."

CHAPTER II.

"The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face."

When Amy Langton at the age of eighteen left White How, a great rambling house over beautiful Windermere, she was supposed to have completed her education at that finishing school. But she thought that, like that of her brothers at the same age, her real education was just about to begin. She had been very happy in the bare bleak house on the hill, looking across the clear brown lake and lovely Belle Isle, that was russet brown in winter, of every colour that was tender and soft in spring, green in summer, rich and vivid in autumn, reflected in the lucid wave. The windows had views of brown and purple hills, partly clad with pine, rising above waterside meadows, of the bare peaks of Langdale Pikes, and the dim mountainous lake head at Ambleside: westward the lake wound away like a broad river among the mountains. There, her nerves braced by exhilarating mountain air, her spirit fed daily by the stern and lofty

beauty of fell and lake, body and mind developed, the former growing tall, agile, clear-skinned and bright-eyed, the latter eager, acute, and avid of ideas, she consumed with equal readiness and satisfaction the hearty north-country fare on the bountiful table furnished for these girls in the early seventies, and such intellectual food as was attainable there as well.

A joy to those who taught what she thought worth teaching, Amy Langton was a trial to the music-master. She flatly refused to practise, saying she had wasted time enough on an art for which she had no talent or desire, till at last the wearied man requested that she might no longer attend his lessons. But she was a great joy to the pastry cook, whom the girls visited on Saturdays, and to her school-fellows, being always in good health, good spirits and temper, and ready to help lazy girls.

Miss Amy Langton was not a model pupil, though so quick and teachable in class; she was always breaking rules and crockery, upsetting ink, gravity, and teachers' tempers. There were many rules, mostly petty, always irritating. No moment by day or night escaped the network of tiny restrictions; it was forbidden to walk in the carriage drive, to linger by the front terrace walls, to walk arm-in-arm, to run through hall and corridor, to speak to a servant; to go out alone was never dreamt of. There was not a rule unbroken by Amy Langton; some rules had to be invented expressly to curb this lively damsel's exuberant spirits.

One Saturday in May, a time so delicious in the Lake country, when the varied foliage of the woods presents its greatest variety, the school rowed across the lake and moored their boats on the opposite shore, where they dispersed in the woods to find lilies of the valley and other flowers of the season. Miss Sterne, who had nearly accomplished the years allotted to man, accompanied her pupils on water expeditions, so that if they went to the bottom she might escape the reproaches of bereaved parents.

Comfortably seated on a camp-stool in a shady nook, the mistress of the school enjoyed the exquisite prospect before her, the lake shining in the sun, purpling mountains reflected in its still surface, whispering leaves overhead—and envied the young lovers drifting past in a pair-oared skiff. At seventy single blessedness has drawbacks. Unknown flowers and plants found by the girls were brought to her for her to name, else her solitude was unbroken. The young head governess withdrew into a little cove beneath some rocks by the water-side, listening to the waves' tiny wash over pebbles at her feet. The girls' light dresses fluttering in and out of the trees were just visible to her, their clear voices calling one to another, just audible. Made-moiselle was on guard by the shore; Miss Sterne watched above; all was safe; she opened a book and was lost in it till a quick step over the pebbles sounded, and a voice cried, "Miss Stanley!" Fatal, too frequent appellation! Governesses soon learn to hate their own names. She looked up at the lanky figure of a girl of barely seventeen, standing shy and awkward before her.

"You gave me back my English composition last night," the girl said, colouring deeply and speaking abruptly.

Miss Stanley's delicate face showed impatience repressed. "Yes, Amy, I gave you a Very Good. It is the best composition you ever sent in."

"Thank you. But I am afraid I did wrong. There—was—this—" holding out a paper, "in it folded up. First—I must have thought it was meant for me, seeing your handwriting—and, before I knew, I had read half—then somehow I was obliged to go on to the end."

Amy's cheeks grew redder and redder, Louisa flushed when she took the paper, and, having glanced at it, laughed.

"Never mind," she said, hoping to be left in peace. "It is nothing personal."

But Miss Amy must needs burst into tears, "I am so sorry," she said. "I never thought of it till I had finished reading."

"For pity's sake don't cry. It is only a translation from Homer. Had it been anything personal, instinct would have told you not to read. No, it was not dishonourable. Silly of me to leave the paper. Come and sit by me. Let us talk of something else."

The girl looked up through tears at the clever young face and wistful eyes with sudden interest. "How clever and kind you are!" she cried. "How did you learn Greek?"

When she heard that it was done by grammars and lexicons without any help, she threw herself, like a long-legged boy, on the mossed ground before Louisa with a great "Oh!" of wonder and admiration.

"Let me learn Greek, Miss Stanley. We learn in school such an awful lot of humbug. Greek is not humbug."

"You shall learn Greek; I will teach you—at least what I know. But we shall have to get up before the bell, these bright mornings."

"It's a shame to take advantage of you; you have such a lot to do."

"Never mind; it will drive home what I have learnt already."

"You seem to know everything."

"I seem to know nothing."

"Why do you want to learn? Surely you have enough to do here; and we often give so much unnecessary trouble."

"I want to know. I want to live, not vegetate. I want to be useful, and I want to make the fullest and best use of my talents. I want to make a career," Louisa replied, dreamily gazing over the purple hills.

"You are the most extraordinary person I ever met," cried Amy.

"In your long life, Amy?—The word talent comes from the parable."

"Have I any talent?"

"Talent enough, but no ambition, no industry. Your wits are far beyond any girl's at White How."

"Well, they need be. But what is the good? Next year I shall go home and spend my life like Grace and Georgie, going to

parties, receiving callers, shopping, and making clothes. If I were a man, or had to do something for a living! I wish to goodness I was obliged to work."

"And yet I am not satisfied, though I enjoy these privileges."

"You don't like teaching? Well, neither should I, especially unruly girls like us."

"I have not the gift of teaching. Besides, we are not teaching you the right things in the right way."

"Then why don't you set to work and do it?"

"Firstly, I am only a helper here. Secondly, parents would never send their girls to us if I did, as Miss Sterne often complains. Well, you shall learn Greek, and you shall, even if circumstances compel you to do a great deal of visiting and dressmaking, at least keep some corner of your life for better things. But duty goes first."

"Life seems a muddle; everything is such rot," cried Amy, making ducks and drakes with flat pebbles over the pellucid water. "I don't want to come out. Boys don't come out. Miss Stanley, what would you do if you were not a governess?"

"Take up some special branch of science or literature. I would have a profession; I should like to be a surgeon."

"Splendid! But women can't."

"Why not? Ah, there's the recall! What a bore!"

There was no help for it. They had to rise and make their way to the landing-place, where girls swarmed round the boats, handing in cushions, books, luncheon, flowers and plants. Heads were counted, places and oars assigned, in each boat, the signal for starting given, and they pushed off over the sunny waters, making the shadows of the fells tremble in their wake. They rowed among fairy-like islets, crowned with dark rocks and trees, carpeted with moss and flowers. A pair of swans followed them, bending their beautiful necks to take biscuits the girls threw, and making sudden sweeps after some morsel carried away by the water. Amy,

bending easily to the light oars, pulled a noble stroke; it was difficult to pair her with any girl; she watched Langdale Pikes growing glorious in clouds of molten gold, High Street and Coniston gathering purple shadows about them, Ambleside fading into indistinct rose-mists, while Wray Castle stood out gray and solitary, like some venerable relic of feudal splendour, and always she was thinking of this new stimulating notion that women might be doctors. Pleasure boats flitted by in shadow and sun-light, a little steamer dashed hastily along, leaving a silver furrow behind it. The girls sang "*O Dolce Napoli, O suol beato*," and "Row, Brothers, Row, the Stream runs Fast," to the light plash of oars, one boat answering the other by turns till they reached Bowers Bay, where difficult navigation compelled them to break off as they wound among numerous little barks.

Amy's place was by Louisa in the crocodile formation that wound through the steep street, past heavy stone houses pitched here and there as if at random.

"Miss Stanley, is it unfeminine to know much?" she asked.

"Was Lady Jane Grey unfeminine? or Elizabeth Herschel? or Mary Somerville? or Vittoria Colonna?"

"But strong minded females, Women's Rights women and all those, aren't they rather horrid?"

"If they are horrid, it is not because they know too much, but too little. One side of their nature is cultivated to the detriment of another. They have been instructed, but not educated, not drawn out. But revolutions are not made with rose-water."

"Miss Stanley," Amy flushed hotly and paused.

"Well?"

"Don't men hate learned women?"

"Do they? What if they do?"

"Only, I should not like men to hate me. I shouldn't like to be an old maid," she blurted out, growing redder and redder.

"Then don't be a young owl. Knowing Greek will not unfit a girl to be a wife. Oh!

my dear Amy, half the misery of life comes from wives knowing nothing that interests husbands."

"You don't think it silly, then, to think of being married?"

"Young women ought to think seriously of marriage. To think of nothing else, like some of these girls, is idiotic."

"I begin to love you, Miss Stanley. I think I always liked you, though you are a governess. This sweet Greek! Pity it's Sunday to-morrow."

Tea at white How was a noble function, the only drawback to which was its brevity. Girls rose hungry from table at the signal for grace, purely because they had not had time to satisfy the regal appetites they acquired in bracing mountain air, appetites unspoiled by excess or unwholesome food, and fostered by regular hours and constant occupation. The table, ringed round by rosy girl faces, was pleasant to behold. The teapot was supplemented by terra-cotta jars of water; no excess in that pernicious and seductive cup was therefore possible. A noble ham, brown loaves, piles of oat cake, glasses of honey, treacle and jam, pickled char, Eccles cakes, apple cakes, fresh sweet butter and rye bread; all pleased girlish palates, all vanished swiftly and silently. The business before them was far too serious to admit of the levity of conversation, which was further hampered by being held in French.

"*Passez le sel, s'il vous plait.*"

"*En voulez-vous encore?*"

"*Merci.*" Such was the exciting and pleasing tenor of this table-talk. There was, in consequence, more time for reflection, and also for enjoying beauty through the large, open windows which looked over the little town, the square grey tower and the placid lake and surrounding mountains, high above which Langdale Pikes rose darkly against a rose-flushed sky. Tea finished, girls strolled in the garden, or sat in the verandah under the eye—they were always under some eye—of Mademoiselle. Then, in an upper chamber,

known as the music-room, the scene of many conflicts with the music-master, the first delightful Greek lesson was given, by an open window. Happy hour, happy, eager pupil, happy teacher! Lake and mountains changing in the setting sun, long-lingering Northern afterglow shedding pale lustre over dark shoulders of the Fells, a wan, white star trembling into lucid gold-green above the hill were mingled with the fascination of those novel characters, henceforth to be friends for life, Alpha, Beta, and Gamma. A blackbird sang in fresh-leaved woods below, till orange points gleamed on the margin of the lake, and a steamer's green light played on the still wave, when the last load of passengers was discharged on the quay. The Greek lesson over, and light gone, teacher and pupil sat talking with young enthusiasm in the long twilight, till the prayer-bell rang. Every character in that curious, interesting alphabet, every inflection of the first noun learnt that night, sank deeply, enchantingly in the scholar's memory, and ever after recalled the charms of that pleasant twilight hour, the blackbird's flute notes, the steamer's throb and the sound of her bell, as well as the deep and romantic affection for the teacher, that sprang then in her pupil's heart. Louisa's gentle manner and soft Southern accent was the model constantly held before the school: though not, strictly speaking, pretty, she suggested beauty: she was popular, ruled firmly, entered into sports, and knew how not to see trifles. Mademoiselle was afraid of La Gracieuse, Miss Sterne, herself an accomplished woman, had a certain awe of her learning, mingled with affection; for "La Gracieuse," as the girls called Louisa, was exceedingly clever and learned. It was whispered that she spoke Sanscrit, and had refused the hand of an Oxford professor in faultless Greek. She was particular about the fit of her clothes, and the harmony of her colours: she never wore bad gloves. This redeeming weakness gave her more power over her girl

scholars than all the virtues and all the talents put together. She was the only daughter of an Oxford Don, who, renouncing his celibate fellowship for a country benefice, had married late in life a lady no longer young, and died ten years later, after a year's widowhood, leaving just enough property to bring up and educate his son and daughter, transmitting to the latter a taste for study and a well-developed active brain, to the former, now in the army, little but his name. Thus, having so few natural ties, La Gracieuse was the more ready to respond to the adoring affection Amy Langton lavished upon her; at twenty-three she was scarcely older in heart than Amy at seventeen. She had two strong ruling ideas; the emancipation of her sex from ignorance, frivolity, prejudice, and petty tyranny, and a desire to console and heal. The latter, together with a strong natural bent towards natural science, made her wish to be a physician and surgeon. Amy, with more imagination, had a similar leaning towards science. She had been a troublesome child, who cut open bellows to see where the wind came from, and worried her elders for a reason for everything. A desire to heal, and a motherliness that preserved her dolls from the destruction that befell toys and furniture at her hands, bent her thoughts later to the study and practice of medicine.

After the happy Greek lesson, associated ever after with delicate heryl green of afterglow, dark mountains, and glory of the crimson and purple zenith, with the blackbird's notes, distant laughter of school-mates, faint sounds rising with blue smoke from the village, the fresh smell of dewy May foliage, associated above all with Louisa, Amy began to look forward to a liveable life, full of aims and interests. Hitherto the aftertime had been thought of as an ending to all things, like death, no desirable hereafter. Other studies were added to the Greek. Leave was obtained from home to stay up an hour after the school had gone to bed, till half-past nine, instead of half-past

eight, thus leaving ample time for beauty-sleep. Time was filched from early morning and holidays. Often the two, having stolen noiselessly from their beds, saw the sun rise on the Westmorland fells and waters. Now a dark mass of mountain would be crested with rosy gold, gradually stealing downwards till it blushed sudden crimson over the pale mirror of the lake. Crimson would change to purple, orange, pale gold. The lake would turn to delicate blue in sunshine, with a whitish gloss like folds of satin and in shadow clear rich brown, the brown of the high moors, whence the waters descended to its basin. Mists would float in capricious shapes about the hill-tops, a solid white cloud would brood over the lake like a sleep, hill-tops standing clear in morning gold above it, while the lake lay still and dark beneath it with boats' shadows cut sharply upon it. Gradually the white cloud warmed to deep purple and crimson; again the crimson paled to rose, the rose to salmon, to primrose and faded into nothing, when the unveiled lake and mountains were spread out clearly in the morning light. Then rose matins of early blackbirds and thrushes; the bleak moors and windy fells of Westmoreland are too cold for larks. In winter, wrapped in shawls and shivering in the light of a solitary taper they saw the hill-tops, nearly always covered with snow, gleaming beneath frosty stars and wintry moons; at times the weird lustre of an Aurora spread over the sky, ribs of light springing from horizon to zenith, where they met, like the stone ribs of a vaulted roof. These solitary studies in the death-like stillness of the sleeping house, had a tinge of romance and mystery that enhanced their charm; there was keener delight in knowledge bought at the expense of ease and comfort.

When the sad moment arrived to take a final leave of White How, Amy Langton left it with deep regret, but with promises to correspond and pursue her studies at home.

But *La Gracieuse*! She was thinner, paler, more ethereal in appearance than ever.

CHAPTER III.

"And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
Heavy as frost and deep almost as life."

"What *am* I to do with Amy?" Mrs. Langton asked her stepson Steven, the head of the family, an ex-captain of dragoons of about forty-five.

"What has she been doing now, mother?"

"She is so utterly unlike other girls. She thinks. She will say what she thinks, which is worse. She reads Julius' medical books; the most shocking things, my dear Steven. And she dislikes society. She wants to go to Girton. Grace's sisterhoods, slummings, and perpetual church-goings are bad enough. Cecil cannot do upon his pay in the Sealing Wax Office. Poor Algernon, of course, is a trial. Georgie is my only comfort. But Amy, hidden away in corners with books and bones and dissections of dead bats and birds, is something appalling."

"Shocking, mother, shocking! Still, Amy isn't a bad little maid, and she's young, too. Eighteen, isn't it?"

"Now she wants to study at this new school of medicine for women, thanks to that horrid governess, Louisa Stanley."

"Let her come to us for a few months. I'll reason with her. Alice will urge her to sweet reasonableness. We'll make a woman of her."

So Amy went to Baron's Cleeve for a few months. Her brother reasoned with her for a few months; his wife likewise. The immaculate Lester, whose little estate, Croft Hall, was near, frequently called, dined, lunched, slept at Baron's Cleeve during those few months, and reasoned with her, but she was still immovable. Mr. Lester was at this time much burdened with the moral welfare of his neighbours, which he lost no opportunity of trying to promote by precept as well as example. Amy thus had the advantage of counsel's opinion against her project, to which she remained firm, nevertheless.

When she went home, she importuned her

mother daily to save her from the emptiness of an ordinary spinster's life at home. She spoke of Mrs. Langton's recent losses, and of her straitened means in case of the step-brother's death. "The boys will marry," she said. "Boys always do. Cecil will never be rich, and always extravagant. Algernon has already spent his money, and wants help himself. Julius will never make a fortune. Grace, Georgie, and Lucy, when they marry, will take their portions. How little will be left!"

"And Amy, when she marries?"

"Amy will never marry," she replied; "and if she does," she added inconsequently, "she will first make a stipulation that her mother is cared for."

Mrs. Langton was touched. None of her other children had troubled themselves much about a future provision for her.

Finally, Amy won her point. Steven persuaded her mother that a few years' study would, at least, be good discipline for the young woman. "The whim will soon pass if not made stronger by opposition," he said. Amy's god-mother had left her a few hundred pounds; this would pay the expenses of her studies. "You can buy a good deal of experience with £300," Steven maintained. So Mrs. Langton reluctantly yielded, to the intense anger of Cecil and Julius, who refused to meet their sister while she studied medicine. Amy therefore shared Louisa Stanley's rooms, an exile from Angel Road.

"I am afraid we shall find the want of male society a great void in our life," Amy said one evening, when the friends were sitting over their fire after dinner.

"Of course we shall, and our development will suffer in consequence. But that cannot be helped. These conventionalities will pass and men's prejudices will give way."

"Yes, we are only pioneers, after all, though the first roughness of the way has already been smoothed for us by more daring spirits. We must be content to give up the softer things of life."

"Certainly. We must be careful not to

marry, for instance. It would be a good plan to found a secular order of celibates. At all events you and I will take vows against marriage, Amy."

"Why bind oneself by vows?"

"Lest you should be tempted. 'We must certainly not marry, Amy,' repeated Louisa.

"I don't know about that," replied Amy.

"Ah!" returned Louisa, reproachfully. "You are weak! You are not prepared to sacrifice yourself to the Cause."

"Suppose it should involve sacrificing somebody else?"

"You traitor! you are in love."

"I am not," replied Amy. "But I am human."

"Even if I should lose my health,"—— Louisa added after a pause.

"Louie," the other interrupted, "You are not really ill, are you?"

"No, only feeling the effects of governess life. I left off and entered this haven of rest just in time. You are strong enough."

"Almost too strong, I never know how to throw off my superfluous energy."

"There is another disadvantage for us. We have no physical training, like those noisy boys at St. Scalpel's, and our recreations must be few and select."

"Amy, be very careful, on no account form intimacies with men," her mother said one day, after many other injunctions, when visiting the exile at her apartments in town.

"I will indeed, mother," replied Amy, throwing her arms round her mother's neck and kissing her. "But I cannot help laughing; your advice is so superfluous. In Angel Road, I had a hundred times the opportunity for such intimacies. In rooms with Louisa, fenced round by all the bulwarks of conventionality, I am as safe as in a convent."

"Conversazione," murmured Mrs. Langton, in a muffled voice on account of her child's embrace. "Professors, queer people at medical women's houses."

"Nearly all married, all ugly, many old. Dear mother, they are about as dangerous as the mummies in the British Museum."

SWEETHEARTS AND FRIENDS.

"Doctors," pleaded Mrs. Langton.

"All hate us, but one, and he is madly in love with Louie."

"Actually in love with her!" cried Mrs. Langton, freeing herself from Amy's arms. "And are they engaged?"

"Oh! dear no; Louie doesn't care for him. They seldom meet, except in the street."

"Then pray, how do you know?"

"I see it in his eyes."

"You see far too much," complained the mother.

Exiled from Angel Road, Amy passed part of the summer vacation with her step-brother at Baron's Cleeve, where she frequently saw and argued with Lester, whose appetite for these conflicts grew with indulgence, and whose opinions strengthened with opposition.

"I have millions of things to tell you," he said one sunny afternoon, "but do come out. A house is a dungeon to-day."

What more natural than to stroll along terraces together, until they reached a trellised arbour of vine and fig trees, which made a cool retreat on a hot afternoon? What more natural and also what more pleasant and conducive to the confidences of friendship?

The Immaculate forgot his million things for about half-an-hour, then he spoke of his plans. He was about to make an Alpine tour. There was no longer any chance of a county election, the present member had no intention of resigning, as had been supposed. He was on the whole glad, being still too unsettled in his opinions for party politics. Amy was sorry. She thought definite duties and aims would give stability and concentration to his character. In this he agreed. "By the way, if I were really in Parliament, dear pythoness," he said, "and that little apple of discord, Female Suffrage, were thrown amongst us, I should not be on your side."

"Not yet. The many will never be on our side, but descendants of this generation

of either sex will contend in the House of Commons."

"Let me be spared the sight, dear prophetess."

"Society must progress," she continued, "women will rise with men; the great tidal wave is set in motion, it cannot turn till it has reached the flood. Everybody is against our cause; many are against us. The struggle is killing Louisa by inches. It shan't kill me."

"Give it up in time," he said, half amused, half touched by her earnestness.

"Never."

"What is to be done? Argument is useless, compulsion out of the question. But it is hard to stand by and see friends destroy themselves."

She gathered a white rose, she paused and thought. "You are the only person who has ever really shaken my purpose," she said, after a time.

"Perhaps no one else has ever had so true an interest in you and your welfare," he returned. "I would do anything to save you. Let me be your knight, let me rescue you."

"Thank you, I would rather not be rescued," she replied, flushing slowly and deeply.

"Think, dearest prophetess," he added earnestly. "We may not meet, as we are meeting, again for months, perhaps years. You might be so happy in a natural womanly way. You might make *others* so happy." She quivered at this, but made no reply.

Then the old ground of woman's fitness and unfitness was gone over, the charms of seclusion, meekness, and dependence were advocated, the beauty of wifely and motherly virtues extolled, and the loneliness of professional women's lives dwelt upon.

She was greatly touched. She felt that their friendship, the ideal and equal friendship between man and woman of which she had alternately dreamed and doubted, was a real and pleasant thing to both. She felt that it must now come to an end, or culminate in

something more agitating and imperious. "I am not ungrateful," she replied, after consideration, "but I am quite decided."

"Think again," he said, not without anger. He went down to a lower terrace, paced its length and returned with some carnations in his hand.

"Have you been thinking?" he asked, with something in the depths of his dark eyes never before seen by Amy, who was sitting in full sunshine on the low parapet that edged the terrace. She looked away over the wide prospect of sunny harvest, fields, woods, hills, and sea, before she said in a steady voice,

"I have been thinking how sorry I am that you and I will never be able to talk solemn nonsense together about things in general again."

"I was a fool to think I could move you," he exclaimed, dashing the flowers on the stones.

"You are angry," rather tremulously.

"I am sorry," in a softened voice.

They looked at the river on which they had rowed together, the woods and fields in which they had wandered in their brief holiday, and both sighed.

"Good-bye, Amy," he said, lingering; "Good-bye," she replied in a faint voice. Again he said "Good-bye," turned away, came back and said, "Come what may, let me still be your friend."

He was gone. She tried to concentrate her attention on the "Descent of Man." She had no time for sentimental regrets and fond imaginings in her busy, strenuous life. But Amy's pillow was wet with tears that night.

One sunny January day the Immaculate, with the weight of five more years upon his head, and the accumulated wisdom of the same time within it, was leisurely walking along a winding road in the Riviera, rejoicing in the bright exhilarating air from a sapphire sea that broke in hidden foam far below. Arrived the

night before, he had left London a fortnight ago in a rich brown fog, since when he had been at Pisa, in a narrow room, made dreary by sickness, death, and the sorrow of a newly orphaned girl, whom he had brought to the Riviera. He leant over a low wall by the road, pressing a white cluster of violets growing in a crevice. Here was a bush of blossomed thyme, full of murmuring bees, a green, bright-eyed lizard glanced over the stone wall. Ships with curved lateen sails flitted over the clear blue, sea gulls sunned white breasts on waves, the song of fishers was borne across the waters. The bare boughs of plane, vine, and fig were scarcely seen among broad-leaved palms, spiked aloes, orange and lemon groves, shining myrtles, clothing the steep slopes below. Above, a majestic amphitheatre of mountains surrounded and sheltered these sunny declivities from bitter blasts that swept over Central Europe and rushed with concentrated fierceness through Alpine passes. Sterile mountain crags stood bare against the blue sky at the verge of the amphitheatre, their strong limestone flanks seamed and scored by the storms of ages, fringed lower by pine woods; lower still were foot hills, clad with chestnut, oak, and solemn grey stemmed olives, cleft by gorges winding away from the sea, threaded by little bickering streams, sometimes swollen to torrents. Peasants in peaked hats led their sagacious well-laden donkeys down the paths, and handsome girls balanced baskets gracefully upon their heads. A little eminence beneath was crested by a slender-stemmed stone pine, the dome of which was outlined on the translucent blue of the Mediterranean.

After his farewell on the terrace at Baron's Cleeve, the Immaculate was seen little in those regions, never by Amy. Nor did they meet elsewhere, nor did Amy realise the significance of the farewell, or of what preceded it. The blameless knight, whose virtues increased—his friends maintained—alarmingly with time, had not been idle in these years. He went on

circuit with little success; he went to the East, to India, Australia, America, peeped at New Zealand and South Africa, glanced at Europe. He scribbled on most subjects. He had for the last two years represented the borough of Dalesby. He was still as beautiful as the day, and as polite as Sir Charles Grandison.

Leaving the carriage road, he climbed a wild mountain path, when he perceived another traveller a little further on. She was tall, and moved gracefully in a well-fitting serge gown. A botanical tin was slung over her shoulder, a roll of white cambric round her shady hat. She was taking a plant from a sunny bank, so Lester only saw her outline, and some thick plaits of brown hair shining in the sun. She turned at his step with a flush of pleasure and surprise.

"Amy Langton," he cried.

It was indeed Amy, her angles turned to curves, her gawkiness to grace, her eyes bright with pleasure and kindness. "I should have known you anywhere," she exclaimed. "You are not a bit altered."

"But you are changed," he said, "for the better," he thought.

She looked so radiantly happy and so brilliantly healthful it took away a month of low spirits to look at her. "Why is she so happy?" he wondered. "Has she given up physic?"

"No, I am not alone, Mr. Lester; a carriage full of invalids belonging to me is going round by the road. Lettice and I got out to walk. We are to meet by that clump of olives."

"Lettice?"

"Lettice Marshall, my brother Cecil's wife's sister."

They walked over some broken ground towards the olives, Amy giving an account of her invalids; of Louisa Stanley, now a fully qualified surgeon and M.D. in broken health; of Grace, who had fallen into a pining state during her last year in an Anglican Sisterhood; and of Lettice Marshall, who was recovering from fever in the early winter. Amy, who had gone

through all studies and passed all needful examinations to be an M.D. and general practitioner, was taking care of the party medically, socially and financially, and enjoying a delightful holiday as well. Mrs. Langton, in consequence of Cecil's marriage, was now obliged to reduce her establishment. She had had losses besides. But Cecil being gone, Amy was at liberty to visit at Angel Road. Her reconciliation with Julius had been very gradual. They now met with the stipulation that Amy should never refer to professional topics, and were as friendly as ever. "I would rather see you in your coffin," he said, "but since I have done all I could to prevent you, it must be endured."

"Julius," his sister told the Immaculate, "young as he is, is temporary house-surgeon at St. Scalpel's. I am told that his amputations are really beautiful." Georgie and Lucy led the old life, dressmaking, calling and shopping by day; by night, dancing in other people's houses or yawning over fancy work in their own. Georgie was quite as pretty and much more amusing than in former times; Lucy, a brilliant pianist and bad musician. There had been a rumour of Georgie's engagement to Mr. Charles Lovelace, Cecil's friend, of the Sealing Wax Office; it was nothing more than rumour. Since this Mr. Lovelace happened once to go to the same place as Georgie, he had continued to happen to go to every place in which there was a probability of her appearance.

"What a fool I was in those old days," the Immaculate said very wisely.

"Are you so wise now? I liked you well enough as a fool. You would not be so nice without your follies."

This walk was one of those few purely blissful memories that smile along the waste of years. So pleasant that it occurred to the Immaculate, as they strolled on, to spend a few weeks in the Riviera, instead of returning to England as he had intended.

To be continued.

The citizens of London would fetch in the May-pole, accompanied by archers, morris-dancers, and many other devices for making pastime for the day. In the evening there would be stage-plays and bonfires in the streets. The bringing in of the May-pole must have been a charming sight. It was drawn by twenty or forty yoke of oxen, each with a nosegay of flowers tied on to the tip of its horn. The pole itself was painted in a variety of gay colours and garlanded with flowers, wound round it from top to bottom, and handkerchiefs and flags streaming from the top. These poles were often as tall as a ship's mast, and would sometimes be left standing for years, only being freshly ornamented each season. There were several in the City of London, one in Leadenhall-street higher than the steeple of the church of St. Andrew-under-Shaft, and one stood nearly on the site of St. Mary-le-Strand. The successor to the latter was taken down in 1717 and carried to Wanstead, in Essex, where it was made into the support of a large telescope, the property of the Royal Society. Its original height was upwards of one hundred feet from the ground. The regular "May games," where they elected a lord and lady of the May to preside over the sports, were introduced about the beginning of the fifteenth century. During the Great Rebellion May-poles and games were suppressed, but re-established at the Restoration. Various superstitions were attached to the properties of the dew of May-day morning. It was thought to be wonderful as a cosmetic for the face, and women would go out into the fields before sunrise to gather it. Another ignorant idea was that if a maiden threw some over her left shoulder it would propitiate fate into giving her a good husband.

The "furry" held at Helston, in Cornwall, on May 8th, a kind of fair or jubilee, is supposed to originate from the "floralia" festival of the ancient Romans held on the fourth of the Kalends of May. The Cornish people held it so strictly as a holiday that any man found working was instantly seized,

set astride a pole and carried to the river, where he was compelled to leap across an impossibly wide place unless he gave a small contribution towards the expenses of the feast. Gradually all these festive customs, little by little, have died away, till but a faint echo of the original sports was heard in the Saturnalia of the chimney sweeps, who danced round a Jack-in-the-green to the clatter of their shovels and brushes. But even that, with many another old custom, has receded into the dim shadows of the past.

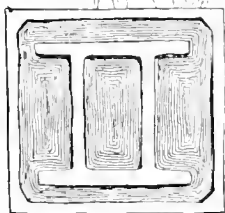
The "Parochial perambulations" during Rogation week, in which the inhabitants of different parishes would go round the boundaries to mark them, is a custom of great antiquity, having its origin in the heathen feast dedicated to the God Terminus, the guardian of fields and landmarks. On one of the three days before Holy Thursday, or Ascension Day, the priest, followed by his churchwardens and parishioners bearing banners and willow wands, would go round the limits of his parish, stopping at certain spots and trees to recite passages from the gospels and implore blessings on the fruits of the earth and the preservation of the rights and properties of the parish. This custom survived the Reformation and continued until quite a recent period.

Two curious old customs took place in Rogation week—one at Keston and Wickham in Kent, which was called "*youling*," had doubtless some Pagan origin. A number of young men would meet together, and running into the orchards, making a hideous noise, encircled each tree, shouting—

"Stand fast root, bear well top,
God send us a youling sop,
Every twig apple big,
Every bough apple enow."

For this incantation either money or drink was expected, but if disappointed of both, they would then solemnly anathematise both owner and trees. The following is another curious relict of ancient usages. The inhabitants of Shaftesbury had from time

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MY



THE TWINS.

immemorial been supplied with water brought on peoples' heads or horses' backs from three or four large wells in the hamlet of Motcombe, in Gillingham parish. By an ancient agreement dated 1662, between the Lord of the Manor of Gillingham, and the mayor and burgesses of Shaftesbury, the mayor was obliged, on the Monday before Ascension Day, to dress up a prize besom, or as it was then called, a *byzant*, resembling a May garland, with gold and peacock's feathers, and carry it to Enmore Green, in Motcombe, as acknowledgment of the water, together with a raw calf's head, a pair of gloves, a gallon of ale, and two penny loaves of white wheaten bread, which the steward received and retained for himself. When this ceremony was concluded, the *byzant* was restored to the mayor, and carried back by one of his officers with great solemnity. The *byzant* was sometimes so richly decorated with gold, borrowed for the occasion, that it was an extremely valuable affair.

Royal Oak Day, May 29th, is the anniversary of the Restoration of Charles II. In commemoration of his escape after the battle of Worcester by hiding in the oak tree, it

became a custom among the rustics to wear oak leaves in the hat on this day, which were sometimes covered with leaf-gold. The monument of Richard Pendnell (in the churchyard of St. Giles-in-the-Fields) used in former days to be decorated with oak branches, and also the statue of Charles II. in the old Royal Exchange. In Exeter the hilarious proceedings of the townspeople for commemorating the anniversary were so uncontrolled as to gain it the name of "Lawless Day." One of their little jokes was to drag out the parish engines and play them upon whom they had a mind to torment, even in the principal streets. This last is one of the old customs and pastimes, whose gradual fall into disuse is scarcely to be regretted. And so we bid farewell to the May of the olden times.

"Hail, bounteous May, thou dost inspire
Mirth, and youth, and warm desire.
Woods and groves are of thy dressing,
Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing,
Thus we salute thee with our early song,
And welcome thee, and wish thee long."

GERTRUDE OLIVER-WILLIAMS.



I N SCHOOL.

VI.—THE HOLIDAYS.

SCHOOL had been full of surprises to me, but it was something of a shock to me on my return home, to find that all the old things had somehow grown unfamiliar, while the new ones had no place there. The dormice had become sleek and unresponsive, with too much food and too little affection; and the new kittens, at the instigation of their mother, treated me as an intruder. The discovery, too, that the name of our head girl contained neither charm nor terror for any one in the house damped my early efforts at conversation; and when I found that people were not in the least surprised at my getting the history prize, spoke of it indeed with a forced interest which was worse than indifference, I felt that the kittens had only anticipated the feelings of their betters, and that I was of no more consequence here than I had been at school on my first arrival there. It was rather hard to understand why one should have to be forever accommodating one's self to something fresh; it had taken me three whole months to get used to school, and here I was again feeling just as much of a stranger as ever in my own home. It was very perplexing, but when I mentioned it to Jack he only treated it in the philosophical manner Nurse used to call his "unfeelingness."

"If it isn't one chap, it's another. Girls are different, of course, because it doesn't matter what they do think. I shouldn't bother about *them*, if I were you."

I reflected that if he knew Winifred Hill, and Nancy Waterhouse, and a few more girls like that, he would have to allow that it did sometimes matter what they thought. But I had reasons of my own for wishing to propitiate Jack just then, and I refrained from argument.

"Some girls are all right," I said mildly.

"They all *think* they are," responded Jack. "But they're a poor show anyhow. Don't

matter to me though," he added indifferently.

"It's all very well," I exclaimed; "but I am a girl myself, and you always seem to forget that."

"Yes," said Jack, looking at me pityingly. "I suppose you are. But you know you never used to be. It's that rotten school."

I thought of the history prize, and felt that I had burnt all my ships. So I led up the subject gently to what I wanted to say.

"Madge Smith is a girl," I said. "And Madge is awfully jolly. She's not a bit like a girl."

"I'm sick of hearing about Madge Smith," said Jack.

"All the same, you'd like her," I protested.

"Pooh!" said Jack. "Like a girl! Jolly glad I don't have to know any."

"You will have to know Madge," I cried; "because she is coming to stay here next week."

I waited nervously for his reply, which was a long time coming. It surprised me very much when it came.

"Next week?" he said, digging his knife into the sleek and varnished neck of the rocking-horse. "That's when Boston terts is coming."

"Boston terts!" I exclaimed. "Why didn't you tell me before?"

"Oh, hang!" said Jack, still working away at the paint on the rocking-horse. "You didn't tell me about Madge Smith, did you?"

We had evidently a common ground of complaint, so it was no use feeling hurt. And I could hardly object to sharing Jack with someone else, when I was going to ask him to share me with Madge Smith. In fact, the only immediate result of our conversation was that he became much more affectionate to me than usual, and I half wished, when the day for Madge's arrival came round, that she had not been coming at all. But still, if she had not been coming it might never have occurred to him to be affectionate, and this reflection so complicated the matter

in my mind that I had to give it up. Jack, as usual, accepted the situation gloomily.

"I wish Boston terts was coming to-day instead of Wednesday," he observed, as we waited for Madge to arrive. "Two whole days by myself, while you and she are rotting together! Poor, I call it."

"But you needn't leave us alone," I said. "You won't, will you? It won't be any fun at all if you keep to yourself. Besides," I added timidly, "you *you might* like her, you know."

Jack laughed incredulously.

"Never liked a girl yet," he said.

"How about Wilkins minor's sister?" I cried.

"Well, what of her? I never *liked* her; who said I did? Besides, she was an awfully decent little girl, and she *could* run; you should just have seen her. It reminded you of that Greek Johnny with short skirts and a bow and arrows—yes, Diana, that's the chap—but other girls are not like that. Besides, I didn't *like* her; she wasn't bad for a girl, that's all. And Wilkins says she is quite different now she's gone to school. Doesn't matter to *me* what she's like, of course."

And he began to whistle airily, to show how little the alteration in the sister of Wilkins minor mattered to him.

When Madge really came, I am afraid I did forget everything else including Jack for the first half-hour, while I ran her through all the rooms in the house, pressed dormice and kittens upon her in dangerous proximity, and tried to tell her everything that had happened since we last met, just fifteen days ago. And in the middle of it all Jack strolled into the nursery, looking very disconsolate, and would have gone away again when he saw us if I had not cried after him, and made him come back.

"This this is Jack," I said anxiously, and watched the effect of the introduction. I seemed to remember in that instant all the remarks Jack had made about the girls he had never seen—all the scorn and contempt he had poured upon their heads, all the views

he had held concerning their manners, their frailty, and their inferiority generally, and I hoped he would remember at any rate that Madge was our guest. My only consolation was the recollection I had of Madge's frank and boyish way with strangers, and I hoped that it would even disarm Jack.

There was the briefest pause, and then she blushed hotly. I had never seen her blush before, and I naturally felt disappointed at her display of feminine weakness. I could vaguely imagine Jack's reflections. But, to my surprise, he spoke first.

"How do you do?" he said awkwardly.

"Oh, I—I'm all all right, thanks," said Madge, and blushed a little more. "I'm always all right," she added inconsequently.

Jack brightened a good deal.

"I'm glad of that," he said. "Some girls are always having colds in their head, don't you know? I'm awfully glad you don't."

"I don't either," I observed. But they did not seem to notice me at all.

"The girls at school are always pretending they've got colds," said Madge. "But that's only because they want to get out of going for walks and things. *You'd* pretend to be ill if you had to go out two and two, and walk like a snail."

"Guess I should," said Jack. And the conversation slackened. "What do you like doing best?" he asked her, presently.

"Reading jolly books, I think," she replied without the least hesitation. And I trembled again for the opinion Jack was certain to form of her. But he did not seem in the least disconcerted.

"I'll show you some bound numbers of the 'Boys' Own Paper,' if you'll come with me," he said.

And they went off together at once. I was left behind; but they did not seem to notice that either. Indeed, for the whole of the two days which elapsed before the arrival of Boston terts I spent most of my time alone, while Jack and Madge talked together, romped together, and even read together. I had never seen Jack spend more

than five minutes with a book in my whole life; but now he suddenly developed an extraordinary taste for reading, and would sit with Madge Smith for an hour at a time, with a large volume open in front of him, resenting bitterly any interruption I might try to make for my own selfish reasons. Those were the dulllest two days I had ever spent; and to think that my own particular friend, to whose visit I had so looked forward, was to answer for it, was the most annoying thought of all.

"Hullo! What's the matter?" asked Jack, coming upon me in a corner of the nursery, after breakfast. He was swinging his skates about in the most aggravating manner, and I knew quite well he was going to take Madge to the Serpentine.

"Nothing," I said, very crossly. So much was the matter that this seemed the only appropriate answer.

"That's all right then, isn't it?" rejoined Jack, quite cheerfully.

"No, it isn't; you know it isn't," said, still crossly.

"That's just like a girl," cried Jack. "First you say—"

"Oh, don't," I interrupted. "Of course I'm like a girl, or else I shouldn't be a girl, should I, stupid? Why don't you go out and leave me alone?"

"Why don't *you* come out, instead of sticking in a corner and grumping?"

"Because I haven't been asked. And I'm not grumping; it's all you," I said, becoming incoherent. Jack assumed a virtuous air of patience.

"Girls are the most unreasonable creatures," he began, in a superior tone.

"You seem to find it very easy to put up with one of them, anyhow," I retorted, choking with the tears I would not allow to fall.

"I like that! Why, it was you who *wanted* me to be friendly with her two days ago," exclaimed Jack. "And now that I'm doing my best—"

"Oh, yes! Easy for you to pretend you're

only doing it to please me. It's so likely, isn't it?"

"Of course I'm not. It's quite impossible to please you, you're so beastly unreasonable," complained Jack, beginning to show signs of repentance. But I seized the opportunity to become dignified; and when Madge came in, also swinging her skates in an aggravating manner, I was gazing out of one window and Jack out of the other, and neither of us was speaking a word.

"Isn't Becky coming?" she asked, when Jack hailed her with much relief.

"I don't know. Are you, Becky? She doesn't know how to skate," he said, rather lamely.

"No," I said, without turning round. "I'm not coming. I wouldn't come for *anything*."

"All right," they said, evidently much relieved. "You'll be all right, won't you? And this afternoon we'll do something jolly."

And I was left to meditate on my unreasonableness in wanting to learn to skate instead of spending the morning alone.

That afternoon Boston terts arrived. He was rather small and very square, with flat red hair, and a round, freckled face, and he had a very polite manner—although how much of it was shyness it was difficult to say at first—and he was altogether quite unlike the important person I had been led to expect, who hated everything feminine, and was not going to notice me at all. As it happened we were thrown very much together, for Madge and Jack continued to go about with one another, and there was nothing left for me to do but to meet the half shy advances of Boston terts. And there was something comforting to my wounded feelings in the knowledge that this doughty champion of football, this avowed hater of my sex and leader of his own, should want to be friends with a mere girl. But Jack's friends were always so very unlike his own descriptions of them, that I soon got over my surprise at the gentleness of Boston terts, and set to work to accuse the same

jealousy in Jack that was still torturing myself. For all through that week of the holidays I never ceased to feel hurt that Jack had so readily thrown me over for Madge Smith; and although I concealed my injured feelings before our two visitors, I never felt wholly natural with him as long as they were there. But Jack seemed quite unconscious of my desire to annoy him, and went about as cheerfully as ever. He was always like that. I sometimes wished he had not been so good-tempered; it would have made it so much easier to quarrel with him.

"Where's Jack?" Boston terts asked, soon after his arrival.

"Oh, he's down in the schoolroom, reading," I replied. Boston stopped tickling the dormouse with a piece of string, and stared at me incredulously.

"Jack *reading*?" he exclaimed. I nodded. "He's always reading now. It's awfully slow; I wish he wouldn't," I volunteered further. My companion was silent for a moment or two, and I tried to think of something to say that should honour the capacity of Boston terts. But he spoke first, and saved me the trouble.

"I say, do you like swotting at story-books all the holidays?" he asked suddenly.

"Oh no; at least, only sometimes. I like *doing* things best, if they're jolly things; and I don't often read in the holidays—there isn't time, and Jack never would let me. Besides, I don't want to, *much*; I don't really," I said hurriedly. The desire to please Boston terts was very strong within me at the moment, and I was much divided between common truthfulness and the sore feeling of my loneliness.

"Good for you," said Boston approvingly. "Can you slide down the balusters? And does anyone kick up a row if you do?"

"*Rather*," I replied, to both questions. "But you have to watch them out of the house first, and then it's all right. They're out now," I added suggestively. Boston terts gave me an answering look, and we raced out on to the landing.

"Look here, Becky," he cried, as we landed with a thump, one after the other, at the bottom of the first flight of stairs; "we'll go down and rot Jack, shall we? And I say, you are *great*, aren't you?"

I glowed with pride, and we accomplished the next flight with the same success.

"I tell you what's much better," I said, as we paused again, "and that's tobogganing down on a tea tray. You can only do it on the bottom flight, because it's straight, and it's rather dangerous, because there might be a caller. But still, it's *ripping*."

"You bet," was the eloquent response of Boston terts, as he went sailing off again. When we reached the ground floor, and sat on the bottom stair to recover our breath before going in to "rot" Jack, we felt that our friendship was a thing accomplished. Then I blurted out the question I had been wanting to put to him ever since we began to grow intimate, ten minutes ago, on the nursery landing.

"I say, do you like to be called Boston terts every time, or is Boston enough?" I asked him, anxiously.

"Terts is all right," he said. "Nobody says Boston; it's confusing when there are three of us, don't you see?" It was the first time I *had* seen why terts was tacked on to his name, but I did not say so, and watched him silently while he doubled himself up at what seemed to me a very acute angle, and fumbled away at his shoe lace, which was already tied twice over.

"My other name is Dick," he then emitted in an apoplectic voice. And, of course, I understood.

All the same, as I said before, I was not really happy once during the whole of that week. And although I was quite sorry when Boston terts drove away in a cab, I was cheered by the thought that Madge had also left an hour or two ago, and so Jack and I would be alone again for the last few days of the holidays. All the same, I rather dreaded his return from the station, and wondered whether he would feel as uncomfortable as I

should when we met for the first time without the protection of our two friends. But I might have known he had completely forgotten our little quarrel, and I was vaguely disappointed when he came whistling into the nursery just as though nothing had happened.

"I suppose you'll find it awfully stale without Madge," I could not help saying.

"Oh no," said Jack, with the most provoking density. "You're there, aren't you?"

I fired up angrily. This was too much, considering the soreness of my heart at his neglect.

"If you think I'm going to amuse you when there's no one else, you're mistaken," I cried passionately. Jack stood and stared at me. I know he had literally no idea what I meant; and I have no doubt I merely appeared to him in the light of an extremely disagreeable person. And yet, it was not altogether my fault that I had a better memory than he.

"If you're going to be in a wax for nothing," he remarked, "I'm sure I am not going to stay here."

And then I cried. I had not cried before Jack since I was about six, and I verily believe he had not thought me capable of tears. But I had been miserable about him for a whole week, and Boston terts had failed to satisfy me as Madge had satisfied him, and I could not help it. I thought his scorn would have been intense. But instead of that, he came and looked at me, and grew very red, and touched me on the cheek very gently.

"I say, Becky, don't," he said, and looked round to see if anyone was listening. "Of course, it's all my fault, no rotting; only do dry up, there's a brick. I'll do anything you like if you'll only stop crying, and tell me what I've done. I never meant to do it, honour bright I didn't, and of course I'll never do it again. I say, Becky, buck up, dear old girl; there's no one half so fit as you anywhere, you know that don't you?"

Madge is all right in her way, but she's awfully tiring, and she funks lots of things. I shouldn't care about seeing much of her, don't you know. There, you're all right now, aren't you, old chap?"

I was all right, as he said. And that moment quite made up for all my misery when I thought Jack did not care for me any more. And I think Jack, in spite of his good temper, and his density, and his bad memory, really understood me that afternoon.

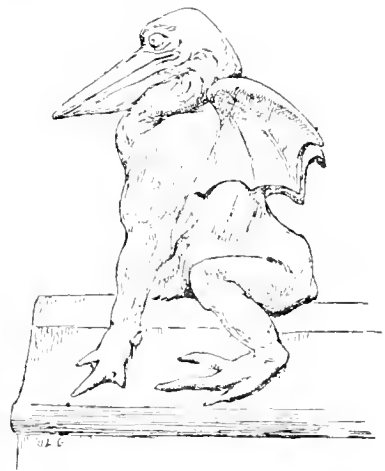
Of course, we quarrelled again lots of times before school began. But that didn't matter.

EVELYN SHARP.

THE END.

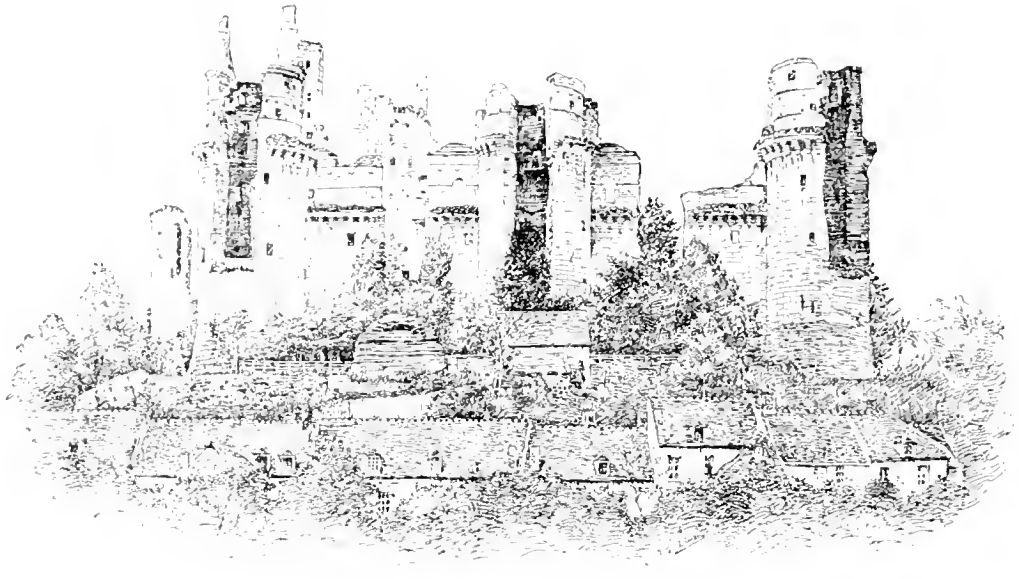
THE CASTLE OF PIERREFONDS.

IN no part of many-storied France does one tread more frequently in the footsteps of history than around the vast forest of Compiègne. Here one may watch the rough



THE BIRD SPHINX ON THE STAIRCASE.

Burgundian troopers close round the Maid of Orleans in that last fated sortie; or stand with young Dumouriez and see "the old King of France, on foot, with doffed hat, in



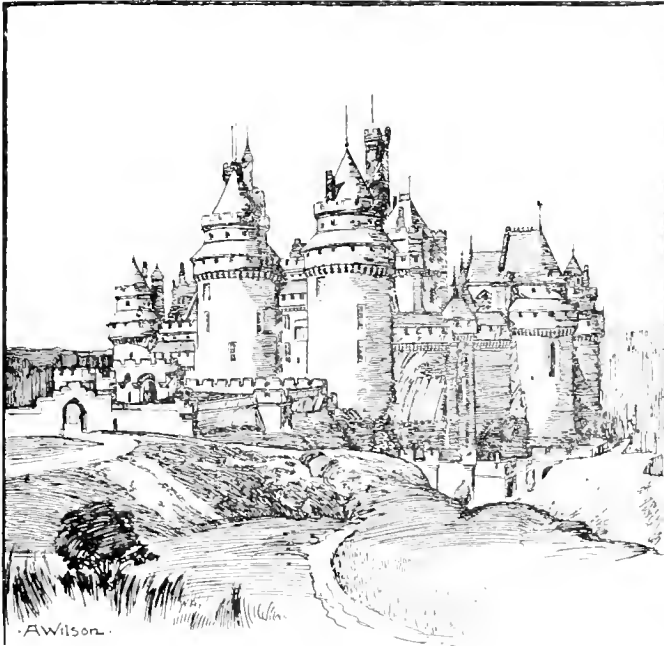
THE CASTLE AFTER RICHELIEU'S DEMOLITION.

sight of his army, at the side of a magnificent phaeton, doing homage to the—"Dubarry." Beside the palace of the *Bien-aimé*, there is the ancient abbey of St. Corneille, where rest the bones of the monarchs of a ruder, simpler age.

But it is to the great fortress, overshadowing the lake and village of Pierrefonds, eighty feet below, that we must turn in the present sketch—a resurrection in stone from the ruins of the past, telling us in its completeness more of the lawless centuries, the tyranny and outrage wherein it played its part, than can the pages of dead chroniclers. It was the same mind that gave us modern Paris that conceived the idea of restoring to its original splendour the old castle, of which the craft of Richelieu had left but a shell. Napoleon III. loved the spot, and determined to make it yet another monument to the glory of the Empire. He employed the genius of Viollet-le-Duc to carry out his scheme: the famous architect made it his life's work, and produced such an object lesson in history as it would be difficult to parallel. Before us stands the most perfect example of a mediæval fortress, as entire as when it dominated the surrounding country

in the fourteenth century. There are eight great machicolated towers guarding the walls, each one named after the martial hero whose statue occupies a niche under the battlement. Thus we have Joshua, Alexander, Cesar, Hector, David, Arthur, Charlemagne, and Godfrey of Bouillon. An independent captain was appointed to each of these towers in times of war, communication with each other being gained by narrow steps and passages which ran to every corner of the fortress. The stronghold was practically impregnable, a garrison of three hundred being considered sufficient to repel a force of as many thousands. Deadly vengeance could be wreaked from the walls upon assailants, with blocks of stone and scalding oil—to gain the entrance two massive gates, a deep moat, two draw-bridges, and a portcullis must be reckoned with. In fact, the only foes to which it succumbed were the time-honoured methods of treachery and starvation.

The magnificence of its former lords is well recalled in the delicate stone traceries, frescoed walls and ceilings, oak-wainscoting carved in the whimsical grotesqueness of the times, heavily-cushioned seats in the deep recesses of stained-glass windows, great fire-



THE CASTLE TO-DAY.

revelled the mercenaries, the indispensable curse of the middle ages. How little these hirelings were trusted by their masters is shown by the low gallery which runs along the whole of one side, where guards were stationed to watch the doings of the lawless band. It is now used as a museum for all the statuary and quaint pieces of masonry which remain of the original castle.

The plateau on which the stronghold stands seems to have always attracted the eye of the warlike nobles. It was on the foundations of the castle, which flourished in the days of Charles the Bald, that the later fortress was

places, and galleries for musicians. The seigneurial gallery is, on French authority, unsurpassed even by Fontainebleu, St. Germain, and Versailles. One of the finest apartments is the great hall, its length being 170 feet, its width 30 feet. It forms the whole of one side of the court, its deep-set stained-glass windows being surmounted at every angle with weird gargoyles of beasts and birds, which leer and quiz at one as though embodying the devilish passions and corruptions of the former dwellers there. Inside delicately carved spires branch from the oak wainscoting half-way to the ceiling, bearing on their front the various coats of arms. Opposite to the big double fire-place is the platform from which the lord of the castle would dispense justice, and in softer moments musicians would soothe the troubled mind. Here the last of the Bonapartes placed the fine collection of historical arms, which has since been removed to the Hôtel des Invalides in Paris. Immediately beneath this room is another of similar size, called Les Salles de Gardes, where brawled and

built in 1390, by the first Duke of Orleans, brother of Charles the Mad. The prince was hardly more than twenty years of age at the time, but his power was only second to the king's. The idea of the castle was suggested to him through fear of his doughty rival and cousin, Jean Sans Peur of Burgundy,



THE GRIFFIN ON THE STAIRCASE.

whose motto was, "I hold it," and whose device was a carpenter's plane, suggestive of his smoothing down all such obstacles as

THE CASTLE OF PIERREFONDS.

checked his ambition. The whole of the first Orleans tenure was marked by these

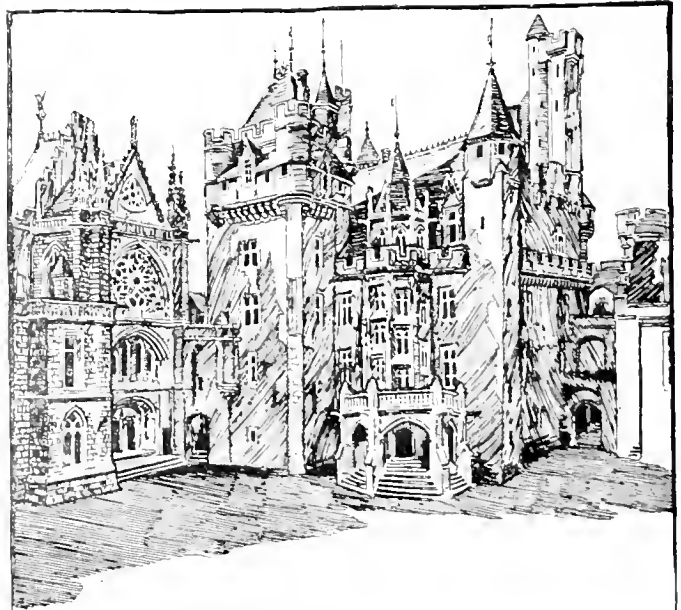


THE DRAGON ON THE STAIRCASE.

feuds, which increased upon his appointment as Regent of France, for Burgundy considered that his was the better right to the protectorate of the royal imbecile. Unable to crush his enemy by fair means, Duke John resorted to treachery, and succeeded in having the young prince assassinated. By such means he gained his end, dominating Charles VI. to such a degree that he forgave him for the murder of his brother, and seized Pierrefonds in the king's name for "his faithful vassal Burgundy." Time worked strange vicissitudes for the castle: a change at court again saw the Orleans in possession, only to pass into the hands of English victors when Harry of England devastated the lands. The Duke himself was taken prisoner, and languished for twenty-five years at Windsor Castle. But long before his captivity expired the lustre of England had been dimmed by the hand of La Pucelle, and

the castle once more gained for the Orleans line. A later lord was raised to the purple as Louis XII., and the halo of the throne shone upon Pierrefonds—across its drawbridge streamed "the king's retainers" to swell his army in Italy and crush the powers of Venice and Rome.

But it was during the long struggle of Henry of Navarre against the pretensions of Philip and the Guises that the most romantic period fell upon Pierrefonds. The Spaniards had penetrated far into France, and fell upon the Castle as an indispensable point of vantage. In this they were assisted by one Rieux, the son of a blacksmith, and a notorious brigand, whose ruffian hands had spread terror even to the walls of Paris. This strange product of the age, fearless, ruthless and bigoted, owing allegiance only to the highest bidder, and as long as the price was paid, lived up to his motto of *Vive la guerre*, and held the stronghold against the attack of two Royal armies. It is disappointing, in the interest of romance, to read that so valiant a scoundrel closed his career with a rope at Compeigne.



A. Wilson

THE CHAPEL AND STAIRWAY OF HONOUR.



THE INNER DRAWBRIDGE.

But his fate had little effect as a deterrent on others of his calling, for immediately on his death yet another rascal sprang to the front to carry on the Spanish cause. This was one Sanveulx, who had risen from Priest to Canon of his Abbey, and now, with the Papal sanction, laid aside his robes for the sword, to break the power of the royal heretic. To all the reckless daring of his predecessor, he added the astuteness of his calling, and was in every way a more serious foe to reckon with. Once the pressure became too strong for him, and he retired to the sanctuary of his Monastery, but time soon saw him again with the Spanish troops and 'plotting the surprise of the garrison. Treachery from within was the means

employed: a dark night and rope ladders, lowered from the walls by bought hirelings, were sufficient to enable the priest and his followers to fall upon the unwary defenders, and once more Pierrefonds was held for Spain. Flushed with victory, Sanveulx despatched a message to Philip soliciting troops to aid him in holding the place for the holy cause, and in supporting the latter's claims to the French Crown. In response, seven hundred Neapolitans and three hundred Dutch were sent to the priest's assistance, and he himself was raised to the title of Captain and Governor.

How high the ambitions of Sanveulx would have raised him had circumstances favoured him, it is not difficult to imagine, but the fickleness of Princes was his undoing. Spain compounded her claim with the hero of Ivry, and the soldier-priest found himself at the gentle mercy of his enemies. His attitude when brought before Henry did him more credit than the rest of his life: he defiantly faced his captor and refused to deliver up the

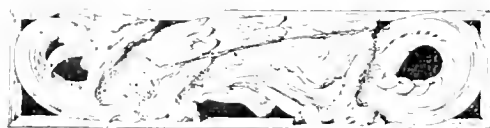
Castle, even when the death sentence was passed upon him. But it is one thing to cage a rat, and another to keep him there; the craft of Sanveulx rose superior to dungeon walls. The particulars of his escape are uncertain, but he reached Belgium in safety, and brought his claim before Philip as a champion of his cause and a protector of the faith. For once Royal gratitude was not found wanting: a liberal pension was bestowed upon him, and he died in the full enjoyment of high ecclesiastical honours in the year of grace 1600.

From this point to the close of its career in history, the story of Pierrefonds is brief. On the fall of the Spanish occupation, Henry used the Castle as a Royal residence and as

a store for his most valued treasures. At the time of the King's murder the Marquis de Cœuvres held the post of Governor, and under his administration it sustained its last and most desperate siege. The high-handed rule of the Queen-mother drove the Marquis to open rebellion, and he was called upon to hold his fortress against the force sent by that imperious lady to subdue him. It was a splendid resistance, carried out with the desperate valour which only the hopelessness of mercy can bring forth, but in 1616 the last resources of defence were used up, and a surrender to the Regent became inevitable. The incident drew the attention of the great Richelieu to the building as a menace to the Crown and to his subterranean policy. He therefore decided on its demolition, and had it completely dismantled in the following year, and rendered unfit for military operations.

So it stood for nearly two centuries and a half, a mighty ruin, still dominating the sleepy village below, but like some blind, toothless monster, powerless now to spread death and famine wherever its shadow fell, yet grim and terrible even in its proud impotence. Nineteen years were spent in the work of restoration, at a cost of a quarter of a million pounds. When the brilliant reign of the Emperor closed in ignominy, the Republic still carried on the project until Pierrefonds now stands a superb tribute to the days that saw the struggle of France to its position among the great nations of the world.

E. TAUNTON-WILLIAMS.



THE DRAGON PANEL OVER THE GATE.

"AN AFFECTION OF THE HEART."

BY MARY HOWARTH.

CHAPTER IV.

RUBY'S future was now assured.

Tonley, the man whose name I had heard mentioned at the service in St. Peter's, turned out to be the manager of the grand Italian operas of Covent Garden Theatre in London. He called on Ruby's master after that Sunday afternoon, and the result was an engagement for Ruby for the coming season.

Of course we all went to London in time for his first appearance, which was in the opera "*Il Trovatore*," and sat in my lady's box, I with my lady and Elline.

After the boy (a boy he was to me, though a man grown) had finished singing in the prison scene, a very strange thing happened. A large bouquet of flowers was suddenly flung from a side box right upon the stage, then came another, then a third, and so on, until there were quite a pile of them on the boards at our Ruby's feet. At the outset of these strange proceedings I thought it well to avert my head, judging them to be the result of accident, and holding it unkind to glare at persons when in distress from awkwardness or the like.

But Elline whispered to me. "It is in his honour, Maisie, that they throw them; to show how pleased they are. Watch mother."

Then up stood my mistress in all her regal splendour, with a bouquet of rich hot-house blossoms in her hand. A twist of her wrist and they too swelled the heap at the lad's feet. It was a proud moment for him, but prouder still I wean, when Elline threw to him a nosegay of small white roses. These he took up in his hand and kissed, telling us later he knew them straightway for flowers that had grown over the old cottage home at Langworthy. Where sure enough they had;

Elfine had sent for them on purpose for this night.

Well, the uproar that began when all the flowers and laurel wreaths were thrown, and Ruby had bowed acknowledgments over and over again, was something almost fearful.

Never for years upon years had people expressed such complete satisfaction at the appearance of a young artist, as they did at this. They shouted, they clapped, they waved pocket-handkerchiefs, they called for him again and again. And again and again came Ruby back, bowing right and left, and looking very red in the face from the excitement of such wondrous applause, and the trial that this first evening must of necessity have been to his nervous system.

Of course, after this, he was wanted for all the grand concerts and oratorios in the town, but until quite the close of the season Mr. Tonley would not let him sing at all except in opera, which was a pity, seeing that unless the public could afford the enormous prices asked for seats at that place, they must needs go without the pleasure of hearing our Ruby.

All this while he continued to live with us, having now a small suite of apartments apportioned to himself and a man-servant to wait upon him. My mistress was delighted with his success, and proud of him too, as she had a perfect right to be, seeing that she had discovered and educated him.

Yet he never forgot the old home at Langworthy. His mother—good soul—was dead, but he went frequently to see his father and brothers and sisters.

After the London season we departed as usual to our Swiss chalet, where the Countess held court with all the grantees of Europe. On no account would she permit Ruby to sing to these guests, for whose edification she had engaged famous performers. The lad therefore belonged to Elfine and me, as in the old days.

As in the old days we three wandered among the mountains and in the pleasant valleys at our will.

As in the old days the children loved one another—until one afternoon a change came, and they were children no more.

You remember the two voids that were filled in Ruby's simple nature, and that I said there was a third. It now declared itself.

We were descending a grassy slope upon a hillside one afternoon, when my childie suddenly slipped. Instantly I was at her side, but Ruby was before me, quick as I was.

"Elfine, Elfine," I heard him cry, with that in his voice which never had I distinguished before, even in his love scenes on the stage—indeed, often in the theatre the public had smiled at such, murmuring not unkindly, nor without a compassion of mercy in their tones. "Ah, poor boy, how pretty, and so Arcadian you know,"—a cry which came I knew, leaping from out the depths of that void I have talked of, and rebounding to the vacuum with a great wave of Love. It touched Elfine as it had touched me, when Dugald my husband spoke my name so, long ago, and I knew it was never Kenneth had had an inch of my heart, but Dugald all the while.

She looked up at him with widely opened eyes.

"Ruby," she said, "I wasn't hurt."

But there was that in her voice also that told me she had heard and answered his cry with one straight from her own heart. Then he raised her, and for the first time not calling for me nor even looking whether I followed, they walked together thoughtfully, the bright blue sky above them, the bright warm sun upon them, into the dark shadow thrown upon the hillside by some loftily towering peak above.

As for me, I stood there understanding what had happened, joyful and yet sad. I knew not why.

For my baby Elfine was a woman now, I knew, and Ruby a boy no longer. But they would never forsake me, I told myself, and we would be happy, as happy as the days were long throughout our lives together.

A few hours more, and Ruby left us for Vienna, and we made preparations for moving to the Chateau de Loignan in France, the family seat of this aristocratic house. I need not detail to you the doings of the chateau. Elline and I had little part in them. Nor need I linger over the presentation of my darling to the aristocracy of France. At this time Ruby was in Paris, and though we saw less of him than usual, he being so greatly in request that he was constantly coming and going, we sometimes had cosy nursery chats together, during which we would all three plan excursions for the coming summer, when we hoped to be in Switzerland again.

One afternoon Ruby and I were alone, for Elline had accompanied the Countess to a grand reception.

With a shy smile of satisfaction the lad told me he was a wealthy man already. (Oh, the pretty way he had of calling himself a man!) All this singing, and going from place to place had, it appeared, been very profitable. He could, if he liked, buy a beautiful house he knew of just outside Paris, and furnish it for his home.

But years would pass ere he did this! The home he looked for must be beyond description, beautiful.

Then off he went again, and we heard of his fame now at St. Petersburg, now at Berlin, now in London, until all Europe rang with his praise.

At length, after many months, we met in Florence. He had been summoned hither by my mistress for a special purpose, none other than to arrange some music for a marriage service; one, said she, in which she felt interested.

The winter afternoon was fast closing in when Ruby came. I was crossing the hall on my way up to the Countess's room, whither I was summoned to perform some slight service for her when he arrived.

Elline was at the moment also crossing from one room to another.

When the two saw one another, they ran in haste to meet.

"Elline," cried he. "Just the same as ever, little Elline?"

"The same, Ruby," she replied; "and you?"

"I have never changed, my child."

"Then go; let it be now."

So I bore a message to my mistress, saying that Ruby had come, and wished to know whether she would be graciously pleased to to receive him.

"No," said my mistress at first, "I have no wish to receive him now. Yet stay, Maisie, say I will give him ten minutes by my clock."

So up he came, and I retired to another part of the great room, screened from the rest by heavy curtains.

What passed I cannot tell, but five minutes or so only had gone by, when I heard my lady's silver hand-bell, and pushed aside the curtains to see what was wanted.

I remember how the room looked, as I stood for an instant in deep shadow gazing at it.

It was lighted by a single tall candelabrum, under which my mistress sat. On her face there gleamed a cruel, contemptuous smile; an evil light shot from her half-closed eyes; the fine cobweb lace on her bosom rose and fell rather more quickly than was usual; the white, small hands, with their flashing finger-rings, now smoothed her gown, now patted her knee, with a gesture denoting either ill-concealed nervous pressure or well-simulated rage.

She was glancing sideways towards the shadow where stood my poor boy Ruby.

His face was deathly white, his bonny hazel eyes stared forward into vacancy, his nostrils were dilated. Over the back of the chair upon which he leaned, his hands were tightly clenched.

Even as I advanced, a low rippling peal of laughter broke from my lady's lips.

"Maisie," said she, waving one hand towards the still figure beside her, "tell that—that singer—who Mademoiselle is."

"Your daughter, Madame," I faltered.

"And I?" pursued my lady.

"Madame la Comtesse de Loignan," I replied. "Oh, mistress, what does it mean? Ruby, my man. Ah, Ruby, never look so."

My lady made a pass in the air, denoting that she required silence.

"The singer must be unwell," said she. "I have but now told him good news. Ask him to tell you, Maisie. No? He is disinclined? Well, then, mine shall be the pleasure. In six months' time my daughter and only child marries His Highness Prince Emmanuelo di Lombardi. That is all. Now, boy, singer, whatever you call yourself, and you, too, Maisie, I have need of my apartment. Good evening, both."

I put my arm round Ruby's, and whispered in his ear, "Come, my dear; come, my darling."

And he followed me from the room with just one great sobbing sigh on his lips, that sounded like the breaking of a spell or the patient acceptance of a heavy burden placed upon him to be borne.

You are not to think that he ever murmured. Not once did I hear a syllable of complaint from his lips.

Nay, my poor Elfine murmured, and often would ask me whether I thought she would ever live through the next six months; praying wildly, too, that death might release her from the weariness of the bondage she was in.

She grew very suddenly from a careless, happy child into a sad, worn-out woman—so quickly, that one day my mistress complained that her beauty was vanishing, and ordered her to dry her tears and be happy.

As if happiness were obtainable to order!

CHAPTER V.

But Elfine's beauty was not vanishing. Day by day she grew more beautiful, only so delicate-looking, and sadly thin.

I told my mistress she was killing her.

"Absurd!" said she. "That is mere nonsense. I am ashamed of my daughter.

Whence did she acquire these plebeian tastes and feelings, I wonder?"

"From me, my lady, possibly," I quietly replied. "She is my foster-child, remember."

"Ah, true!" said my mistress. "Go, woman. You are rude."

I began to think at last that Ruby had better come and take the child off by force. But even this idea I was obliged to relinquish. For it transpired that this grand marriage had been so arranged that Elfine was as good as married already. Which showed me that although their church services were so enticing and beautiful, they were extremely grippish, and secured the people they had to themselves when once they got them, very skilfully.

My poor boy had no chance.

The marriage had been arranged when the child was in her cradle, so my mistress said. The husband to be was one of the young nobles of Italy. But, said my mistress, Ruby's idea had been so absurd, so preposterously absurd, that no notice whatever must be taken of it. All was to be exactly as heretofore.

So we lived on in the same manner until at length the six months came to an end, and we assembled at the Chateau de Loignan for the marriage.

The house was crowded with guests and their servants, ambassadors, even princes, priests of high eminence in the Romish Church, relatives, singers, and persons who were arranging the banquets and fetes that were to take place.

Yet so well was every item planned and so easily did every detail progress, that when the morning arrived I might have thought I was going to put on Elfine's baby gown of dimity, instead of the gorgeous satin robe that was to be her bridal attire. There was an utter absence of fuss.

She looked so white, when Leonie came to arrange the veil and other adornments passing my management, that I was fain to take the dress off again, and bid her lie down awhile. But she smiled when I asked her whether

AN AFFECTION OF THE HEART.

she would let me, and said no. Then came the Countess, ablaze with diamonds and precious stones, and Elfine was led away to the chapel.

Reuben had not arranged the music, but he was there, and had promised to sing, because on that very morning Elfine had crushed into his hand a little note, which later he showed me. It bore these words, "Ruby, sing for me."

So he sang for her. Quite at the end of the service, when everyone else had performed the grand wedding hymns and anthems set for them, and she stood at the altar a newly-made bride, with downcast head and clasped hands, waiting, I verily believe, to hear his voice once more; to hear him sing so sweetly, without any accompaniment soever, the simple old hymn tune which he had sung in the old cottage home at Langworthy the first time they ever met, "For thee, O dear, dear country, Mine eyes their vigils keep."

So through the verses that follow, so through the line of supplication at the end, wondrously sweetly, wondrously simply, wondrously softly he sang.

And I heard the people murmur, "Ah! yes, very good indeed; just the thing to suit a voice such as his, though few men would have attempted it on an occasion like the present after Leblanc and Verrio's marvellous performances, too. But then he knows his powers: he is inimitable, incomparable, this Ruby."

And Elfine? Just raised her face once towards his, then meekly walked by her husband from the chapel, Madame and all her guests following closely.

A brief hour or so, and I was weeping as if my heart would break for my Elfine, my baby, my own child. Oh! this parting brought back all the sadness of my infant Dugald's death, and Dugald, my husband's, and I cried in bitter sadness, until at length I thought of Ruby. I had not seen him when we all assembled in the hall to see my darling go. Where could he be?

Without loss of time I sought him in his

chamber, but no, he was not there. Then I ran hither and thither among the spacious gardens, calling him by name. But no answer came. At last I concluded that he must have left the Chateau, and was making my way back to the house, very sorrowful and lonely, when, passing the chapel, I heard a familiar voice, and entered.

Yes, he was there, though in the gloom I did not at first distinguish him. But I heard him, aye, did I, singing with all his might an ancient tune he and Elfine had many a time and oft sung together in the old days at Lucerne.

When my eyes became used to the darkness I perceived him standing by the altar upon the self-same spot that Elfine had occupied that day. I took a seat close by him, but he did not notice me, and I knew not whether he saw me or no. Verse after verse he sang of song, hymn, and oratorio, gliding from one to another with such lovely liquid notes and trills, as made me hold my breath for very joy and wonder,—but all the while he did not notice me. Until suddenly he stopped. He was singing—ah! how well do I remember!—the solo we had heard in St. Peter's in Rome, "If with all your hearts ye truly seek Him," when suddenly he sprang towards me, and, clutching my arm, pulled me forward, never moving his eyes from the spot at the altar where Elfine had stood that morning.

"Maisie," he whispered, "look there."

So I looked, and there most surely did I see my childie, standing as she had stood that morning, but with her arms outstretched towards us.

"Elfine, Elfine!" he cried, with such an agony of yearning love in his voice. "Just the same as ever, little Elfine?"

And I thought I heard the old reply: "The same, Ruby," as with a sigh she vanished from our sight.

Two hours later a messenger arrived in hot haste.

His news did not take me by surprise, though all the rest of the chateau inmates

were plunged into confusion and dismay. "Her Highness the Princess di Lombard was dead," he said. "Ah, it was sad! She had died in her husband's arms, in the first flush of their wedded happiness—that such calamities were!"

"It was a heart affection," said the family physician, "probably of the character that caused the sudden and lamented death of Monsieur the Count, her father."

It *was* an affection of the heart—I could have told him that; but my lips were sealed for the sake of the dead, and my thoughts flew to the living.

I sought for him again as I had done before, but now I could not find him anywhere. Days and weeks passed by and still I could hear nothing.

Until at last I could bear it no longer, and bidding my mistress farewell, for my work with her I felt was ended, I set out into the world to find my lost boy.

He was not singing anywhere now, I knew. This was his holiday time; perchance he was in Switzerland.

Thither, therefore, I bent my steps, but on the way something seemed to tell me to turn and go to England, to the little place whence we had taken him.

Should I find him? I wondered, as I walked across Langworthy Common to the cottage.

The old father was dead, the children were scattered; yet smoke rose from the chimney, an old man delved in the garden.

An old man! Oh, my Ruby, my bonny boy! An old man!

He is my Ruby now. Not yours, O world, though some day he may return and charm you, as he did before, with all the beauty of his art.

But this must be when he is better. He is not well, my Ruby, nor has he been these many years, and the words you would have him sing have no part in his brain. He can remember none of them, nor yet the play-acting he delighted you with before. All vanished with his illness, and until the sweet-

ness of my Highland breezes bring him back to health he will be mine alone.

So sad it is! His voice as lovely as ever, but with no words save the familiar ones he knew long, long ago.

All he cares for now is to dig in my garden patch and to wander abroad over the bonny hills and dales.

In the evening the people from the village are fond of coming to the cottage, and, while they knit or net, of listening to his voice. By the hour together will he sing to them; they are his only audience now.

Then when they have gone, and I have left him to make our evening porridge, I will hear him murmur gently, gazing the while far away beyond the hills to the heavens above—"Elfine! Just the same as ever, little Elfine."

Then a pause for her reply and question.

Then again—"I have never changed, my child."

Madame la Comtesse is the same as she always was. No one noticed in her the slightest diminution of power, pride, or pomp after the loss of her child.

There are certain conditions or attributes of low birth which bring the humble to the same altitude as those of noble lineage. Put talent side by side with birth, and you have equality of rank.

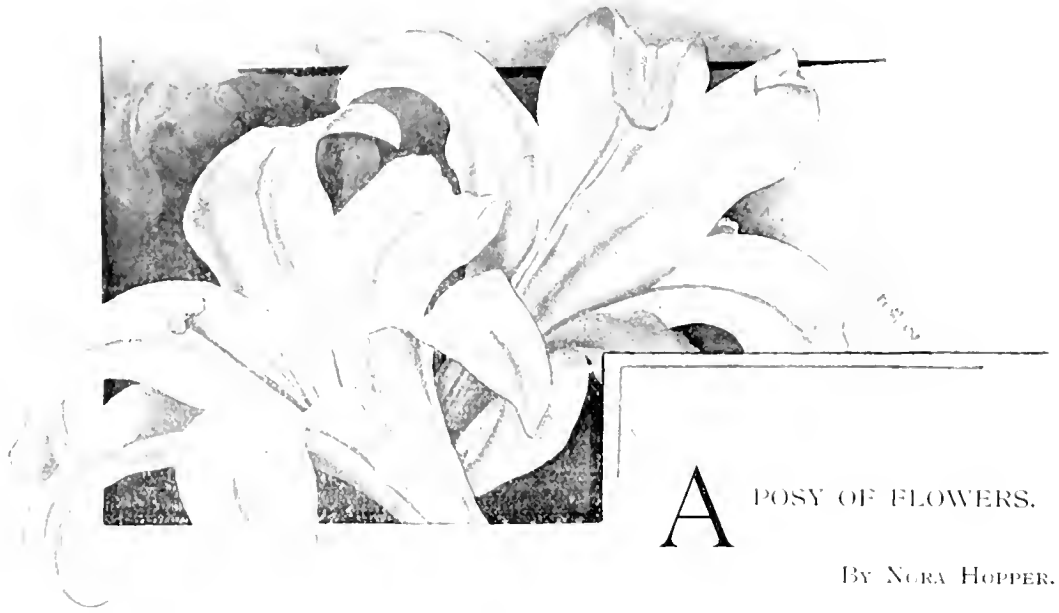
I am a lowly body, but such is my opinion.

My mistress thought otherwise. She thought that blue blood must mate with blue blood, and more than that, that her daughter would so understand the great gulf fixed between aristocracy and low life that there would be no chance of her ever looking upon Ruby save as a servant, for all they were brought up together in the same nursery.

If she had consulted me Elfine might have been here now, and Ruby full of strength. But the past is past, and not even God, as some great man has said, can bring it back again.

And my child died—of an affection of the heart.

THE END.



LONG, long, long ago—long before Sir Thomas Malory, Knight, had even thought of gathering in a sheaf the noble and joyous history of King Arthur, and the sorrowful story of two named Lancelot and Guinevere, who had loved each other to their own undoing, and the death of the Lily Maid—long ago, I say, lilies were crowned as the queens of Flowérie. Not even the rose has so many attributes of history and legend; not even the rose has so many saints and goddesses and ghost-ladies, whose special emblem she is.

Please you to count. To begin with, before Eve was born— and we could not begin much earlier— there was a beautiful demon-woman called Lilith, who was Adam's first wife, whom he put aside for the gentler, earthlier Eve; and this same slighted Lilith's evil memory is still preserved in our pretty word "lullaby," which means only "Avaunt, Lilith!" and dates down from remote days of Israelitish wanderings, when Hebrew mothers went in nightly fear lest Lilith should come into their tents and strangle their innocent children while they slept. Egypt—Lower Egypt especially—was the

Land of the Lily, and lilies were dear to all her gods. In the darkness of her temples fresh lilies lay daily on the knees of Osiris, where he sat in carven stone, heedless of the worshippers that came and went about him. And lilies bound the solemn brows of Isis, behind her mysterious blue veil. Fit flowers for her, were they not? Types of beauty and mystery and fertility. As the latter, the lily is of some consideration in India still; and in countries nearer home—Italy, Spain, France, and Germany—no evil thing dare come to the house in whose garden lilies grow, or to the chamber that has once held lilies. Holda, of the many names and many legends—Holda, who is Horsel and Hertha and Bertha, and perhaps Queen Venus herself—is a lover of lilies. When she sails the midnight sky in her silver moon-boat she holds a lily in her hand; and moon-white lilies are in the crown she wears, when, as the Lady Bertha, she comes to middle earth in a car drawn by ladybirds, to claim the souls of unbaptised children to be her servants in her castle in upper-air. Protectress of spinners and knitsters (let not this dear old word be quite disused!), she dearly loves



ROSES.

the flax-fields, and comes of nights to bless the growing crops. There have been clear-eyed German maidens who have seen her leaning to the dark fields, her hands outspread in benediction, but though she be half a goddess the Lady Holda is half a woman, too, and even better than the flax, she loves the lazy lilies that spin not, yet can out-match Solomon in all his glory, and Balkis, too. Judah was the Lily-land, too, and Florence is the Lily City; and so is Winchester, as witness the three lilies that are blazoned on its arms; and even in party warfare the lily has had a leaf—for did not Ghibellines wear white lilies, while Guelphs chose for their cognisance red blossoms of that ilk? But we must not make our posy all of lilies, lest we grow cloyed with sweetness; we will have marsh-marigolds and thyme, and rue and rosemary—for Ophelia's sake—"not lavender and mints," willow-leaves, roses, and foxgloves, careless of season. Marsh-marigolds especially we must not forego, for whoever carries these about his or her person will never be unkindly spoken of by tongues of fremd or kent folk—"not though he live, not though he die." As for the green willow it is not for the "poor soul Barbara" and the memory of mad maids galore we need value it; it is a tree of the most romantic history, and do you chance to

possess a harp made of willow-wood you may look on it as your rarest possession, for the willow-tree has a soul of its own, and in the "silence of the sleep-time" that soul speaks in music for itself without the touch of any *human* fingers. Then the foxglove salve all sores, and is inhabited by those airy folk whom Irish tradition prettily calls "the gentle people"; moreover, when these same good folk be near at hand "shee betokeneth their coming by bending and wraying of her floures and stalkes." In the old ancient days tradition has it that the foxglove was white as any lady-lily, and then was she hight "Flora's glove," but it fell on a day that the glove was contumacious, and had it rained, or had Flora's hand grown larger, I wot not,



MARSH MARIGOLD.



BROOM.

but the glove refused to go on the goddess's fingers," and in a rage "fair Flora, that is lady of the green," cursed the rebellious blossoms, whereon they lost their noble whiteness and became speckled. The lavender has no such sorrowful history; she is a harmless necessary plant, sweetest when she is old and dry, and the only fact that we can set against her modest house-

wifery is the ancient saying that "lavender and loosestrife loveth snakes." Thyme, which we have chosen also for this magical posy of ours, is a kindlier plant than "old maid's lavender," for it renews the spirits of man and beast, "making them ready for dolesome journeys and monstrous adventures"; and a leaf of thyme stuck in your shoe will "bringe you certainly over boggy ground." Thyme grows on the lawns of Paradise beside those other immortal herbs, amaranth, asphodel, and gillyflower. "Sweet thyme true," it is worn by kindly shepherds and coy shepherdesses; nor do more delicate folk disdain this comfortable herb, witness the confession of one, Master Will Shakespeare, who was father-confessor to the Queen of Faerie once upon a time. Hot mint was Pluto's flower, but its traditions are few indeed, so that we turn readily to the mad maid's rue that you, my readers, may wear, an it please you, with a difference. Dishonesty, sorrow, and witchcraft, these are its attributes; and yet, for pretty Ophelia's sake, we hold our plant o' grace in favour

still. Dishonesty—For your rue thrives best when stolen from a neighbour's garden, and bought rue will not grow at all; and, indeed, I can bear witness to that, for in my garden there were two tall bushes of rue honestly bought of a neighbouring seedsman, and now there is nothing but two withered stalks left of my herbs of grace. Sorrow—"Rue, even for ruth, shall shortly here be seen"—unlike Herb—Patience—This bitter herb grows once or twice in a lifetime in every man's garden, and, although perhaps on the principle of like curing like, rue was mixed in the potion given to possessed folk what time the priest was busy with bell, book, candle, and exorcism, this same herb was a potent factor in spells and witcheries. If you desire to see witches manifest at their unholy work of milking halts and plaiting elflocks, you have but to tie up in your breast-ribbons a sprig of broom and *two* of rue; and the expressed juice of rue given to your husband



ASPHODEL AND WILLOW.

in a new cup turned from holly-wood will "besotten" him so that he will never see beauty in any other face than yours. Yet in some hands rue was not potent to bewitch the eyesight, but rather to clear it from all dulness of earth. Was it not with rue and euphrasy that the Archangel Michael purged Adam's eyes, that he might not see as in a glass darkly? Of rue no more, I think, except that "it hateth snakes," and the garden where rue grows knoweth them not. Rosemary! How could we endure its absence, even if it did not mean remembrance? For rosemary-juice makes old folks young again, and rosemary leaves scattered under the pillow where lies a sleepless head will bring soothing dreams sooner than even poppy and mandragora; and rosemary is meet for maid, wife, and widow, and where rosemary

grows in the garden the grey mare's the better horse, and before wedding guest and funeral car let there be strewed not myrtle and not cypress, but for both, rosemary.

"This herbe is callit
Rosemaryn,
Of vertue that is
gode and fyne:
But alle the vertues
tell I ne can,
Ne I trawe no earth-
lie man."



LAVENDER.



GILLIFLOWER.

ON MAY EVE.

THE wind cries under sullen skies, and its wail makes sadder the town.

Its shrill complaint grows far and faint through long streets dying down;

There are no flowers in these squares of ours, no largesse of green and yellow—

And Oh! but Phyllis has lost her lilies, and Colin's a sulky fellow!

The wind cried sore at my chamber-door this very night that's past,

And I stopped my ears as one that hears the Banshee's call at last,

For who but I should know the cry, and the knock that comes no more,

My love unkind — and not the wind — cried at my bolted door.

NORA HOPPER.

NOTES ON NEW WRITERS.

I.—MARY BEAUMONT.

By means of what Mr. Andrew Lang calls the "parochial novel" we are gradually gathering together the materials for a wonderfully complete history of the life and thought of the country. Germany has no such litera-



ture for the whole energy of the country is absorbed in the gigantic scramble of commerce; French writers of the day have no sympathy with the peasant, whom they look upon as the embodiment of all that is petty and sordid; even Bjornson, the author of such delightful sketches of Norwegian country life as "Arne," or "A Happy Boy," has forsaken his first love, and must now be numbered among the problematists. In this country, however, the literature of localism is rapidly assuming formidable proportions. "Mary Beaumont" is one of

the latest "arrivals." In "Joan Seaton" and in some of her shorter tales she succeeds in doing for parts of Yorkshire what Mr. J. M. Barrie and Ian Mackren have done for Scotland, Mr. Quiller Couch and Mr. H. D. Lowry for Cornwall, Mr. Walter Raymond for Somerset, Mr. Marshall Mather for Lancashire, Mr. H. W. Nevinson for Worcestershire and Staffordshire—to mention only a few names that occur to one's mind.

"Mary Beaumont" has published two volumes, "A Ringby Lass, and other stories" and "Joan Seaton." Personally, I am inclined to prefer the short stories. "A Ringby Lass" is full of the pure air from the Yorkshire moors, untainted by a suspicion of modernity. The little book, exquisitely printed and tastefully bound, a real thing of beauty, is made up of five short stories. "A Ringby Lass" is a vivid picture of Yorkshire farm-life in the forties. The hearty genuineness of the rough Yorkshiremen, full of little prejudices and superstitions, but kindly and great in heart, becomes very real to us. There is little plot, but the characters are all vividly pictured, from the hero, Mark Tennant, a fine specimen of manliness, to old Tummas Bates, who almost dies at the thought that a railway will some day run at the bottom of his garden and comes to the gratifying conclusion that "they're gotten a deal to learn theer (in London) yet," because a young cockney has never heard of the Ringbys of Stapleton Hall.

The second story, "Jack," is the gem of the collection, and, I think, the most finished piece of work "Mary Beaumont" has given us. It is a touching picture of the rough life of the Yorkshire fishermen, the very simple history of a great sacrifice. It is a tragedy without a trace of bitterness. "The White Christ" is the most ambitious story in the volume. It tells how a Norwegian prodigal, buffeted and mocked and reviled by the world, looked upon Thorwaldsen's Christ with the grand words "Kommer til mig" in letters of gold beneath His feet and for the

first time knew what it was to have peace. "Miss Penelope's Tale" is an experiment in the gruesome and fantastic, and—totally unsuccessful. The last story, "The Revenge of Her Race," reminds one of Mr. Gilbert Parker's "The Translation of a Savage." It is another tragedy of self-sacrifice, hardly so convincing as "Jack," but full of true pathos.

I have little room left for a consideration of "Joan Seaton," and I am not altogether sorry, for I think "Mary Beaumont's" short sketches are more successful than the long novel. "Joan Seaton" is wanting in coherent plot. As a picture of Yorkshire life it is excellent, but the story is marred by occasional touches of almost vulgar melodrama which are quite out of place and unnecessary and never convincing. There is one scene in the book which stands out from the rest as a word-painting of exceptional power. Few can read unmoved the story of how Mrs. Seaton receives the news of Kirster's death before the walls of Delhi. There is power and infinite tenderness in the description which must go straight to the heart of the reader. Altogether, "Joan Seaton" is full of promise of greater things yet to come.

"Mary Beaumont" is a *nom de plume* which the author is anxious to preserve. She has spent nearly her whole life in the West Riding of Yorkshire and its people are very dear to her. At the age of nineteen verses from her pen appeared in various magazines, but much suffering and long illnesses have interfered with her work. It is only during the last two years that she has been able to give any serious attention to her writings.

11.—MISS NETTA SYRETT.

THE Keynote series has brought into well-deserved prominence many young writers of undoubted ability, and by no means the least gifted of these is Miss Netta Syrett, whose first book, "Nobody's Fault," was published

last year. "Nobody's Fault" is a very real book, full of the questionings and the little ironies that make up such an enigma. It is the history of a girl, gifted and original, and impetuous to a degree, who frees herself from the fetters of low and sordid surroundings, and after long and weary struggles gains a measure of literary and social success only to find in it all the bitterness of aloes. The first part of the book, which deals with the experiences of Bridget Ruan, first as a school-girl and afterwards as a high school teacher, is particularly successful and almost terrible in its grim reality. Few seem to be able to realise the unseen tragedies that underlie a modern education. A system that has for its foundation a levelling down of all the scholars by endless cramming and examinations, that insists on crushing all individuality by fitting girls of whatever nature or temperament or ability into one hard and fast groove, is a tragedy in itself. Few seem to be able to



picture what the eternal drudgery of a teacher's life must be. The longing for something outside the narrow humdrum existence, an existence bounded often by poverty and struggle and dreary lodgings and utter loneliness, always by "order marks" and exercise books, is voiced by Miss Syrett in all its intensity. She knows the life of a teacher as few writers know it, and there are many who will bear testimony to the photographic accuracy of her picture. Bridget Ruan has to fight very hard for the right to live her own life untrammelled by the petty prejudices and childish vulgarities of her parents and the dreary struggle against poverty, and above all, against despair, is depicted with great power and great sympathy. The bitterness of the aftermath of success makes the end of "Nobody's Fault" sad reading, but throughout the book there rings the true note of the inevitable.

Miss Syrett writes of high school life from personal experience. As a girl she went to a large public school where, she says, examinations and cramming had their usual stultifying effect. At twenty she went to the Cambridge Training College to be trained as a teacher. She had always half unconsciously cherished a dream of writing, and that this dream has been fulfilled she owes largely to the encouragement of Mr. Grant Allen, who insisted that she could and must write. Through his kindness Miss Syrett obtained an introduction to a well-known publisher, who printed her first story in his magazine soon after she began to teach in a high school. For two or three years she worked as a teacher, doing a little writing at intervals. Her experience of teaching was on the whole a happy one, and she holds the opinion that under proper conditions teaching is one of the finest professions, though, unfortunately for women, it is often one of the most terrible. Miss Syrett's connection with "The Yellow Book," to which she has contributed two or three times, began when it first started. As a consequence she took her first novel to Mr. John Lane, who immediately decided to

include it in the famous Keynote series. "Nobody's Fault" met with a success far exceeding the author's expectations. Though Miss Syrett has never been without the praise of a few critics, she has had much uphill work and many discouragements, and in consequence she was not very sanguine as to the reception which her book would meet with from the general public.

Miss Syrett does not write quickly, and she has published but little. Stories from her pen have appeared in "Longmans' Magazine," "Macmillan's Magazine," "The Yellow Book," "The Quarto," "Temple Bar," and "The Monthly Packet." Her new novel, "The Tree of Life," which will probably appear before these lines are in print, is eagerly awaited by all those who believe that Miss Syrett is one of the most promising of "new writers."

J. E. HODDER WILLIAMS.

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM.

RESTRAINT.

So far our Journalistic Class has dealt with the simpler and more initial branches of journalism, such work as can be and is to a great extent done by beginners, or people of no special aptitude for writing, who have fallen into the profession by chance; but it must not be forgotten that there are women journalists who do important work on the leading journals of the day, write leaders, political articles, or reviews of important works, or dramatic criticism. Work of this kind may almost be called literature. Every woman, one would say, would rather do work of this kind than mere paragraph-writing, shopping articles, interviewing, or any of the "things anyone can do." The question is, how are women able to obtain such work? Obviously, of course, by producing work of sufficiently high quality in the first place, but that is not

all. Many feminine writers produce work which for artistic merit far surpasses the average leading article in even a first-class newspaper, and yet one feels their writing would be rejected as unsuitable by any thoughtful editor of a good "Daily."

One finds a hint of the reason of this in the fact that the work and the existence of the highest class woman journalist is practically unknown to the general public, simply because her work is indistinguishable from the work of the average man journalist; it does not declare its sex as the writing of the average woman does, and possibly ought to do. Certainly the work of the average woman writer loses nothing by the distinction. No one reads a woman's novel for instance, who has a prejudice against the feminine point of view or a feminine style; on the contrary, the feminine point of view and feminine style may constitute the chief charm of the book.

But the case of newspapers is entirely different. They deal with topics on which a woman's opinion is generally supposed to be valueless, when a feminine style would be out of place. No ambitious girl journalist need take offence at the statement. A clever man can always discriminate between the woman capable of a sound and wise opinion, and the woman incapable of anything but pretty nonsense, and is always glad to accept the opinion of the former. The proof of this is that the editors of the great dailies are quite willing to print women's writing; but the average man, the man for whose sake leading articles are written, is not specially clever, and men who are not clever are extremely apt to be vain. They would resent the idea of being instructed or advised by a woman, because they are unable to discriminate between the ordinary commonplace women they know and the clever women who are the natural companions of their superiors. Therefore, the editor who is willing to take a woman's work because it is good, will advise her, not to deny her sex, but to keep it in the back-ground, lest his readers should undervalue

her good work because of it, and so think the less of his paper.

In parenthesis I may quote the case of an editor who was not a clever, but distinctly an average man; he paid a woman-writer well for four years, supposing her to be a man. At the end of the four years he met her, and discovered the woman behind the terse and vigorous style and the masculine *nom de plume*. He immediately proposed to reduce her salary. The lady's work, judged according to its merits, had seemed to him worth a certain sum. The knowledge of the writer's sex, in his opinion, took exactly one-third from its value. Of course I do not give this man as a picture of what you must expect among editors, but to illustrate the attitude of the average man—that is to say, the reader.

Remember, it is not necessary that you should be at any pains to deny your sex, or to simulate a sex you have not. The best articles are entirely neuter. There are certain faults which are altogether masculine, and others which are entirely feminine. If a man avoids masculine, and a woman feminine faults, it follows equally in each case that the article will be good, but the masculine faults in a man's article will pass unnoticed by men readers, who probably share them; femininities will be detected at a glance, and probably be treated with very much more contempt than they deserve.

The most common "femininities" in literature are, perhaps, imperfect punctuation—the use of girlish words and turns of speech, carelessness with regard to cases, and "hysteria."

The first of these shows itself in the absence of the semi-colon; to use nothing but commas and fullstops is one of the surest indications of sex—but this fault we have discussed already. For the girlish words and turns of speech it is impossible to give a list, for this girlishness depends entirely on the context. Even "nice" and "horrid," the two most essentially feminine adjectives I can call to mind at the moment, might be used in a perfectly masculine phrase if they were

used with exact appreciation of their value.

By "hysteria," I mean the committing of mere excitement to paper, the appearance of indulging your own emotion, instead of rousing the emotion of your readers. Violently over-stating your case, or what is just as bad for your cause, appearing to over-state it, in the eyes of a reader not acquainted with the facts which have induced your, it may be, perfectly just indignation.

Charles Read was for the most part an absolutely just and trustworthy judge of the incidents and facts he was in the habit of discussing. He rarely expressed an opinion on any matter until he had accumulated a vast array of unquestionable facts in support of that opinion. What he had to say was almost always true and wise, but his manner of saying it was so violent and dogmatic that his truths were often powerless.

"Sir," he wrote to a gentleman with whom he purposed to start a controversy, "Sir, you have dared to contradict me on a subject in which I am profoundly learned, while you are as ignorant as dirt."

Charles Read probably was in the right of the matter; he never wrote on a subject until he was profoundly learned on that subject. His adversary was probably ignorant, but he would only have had to imply in response that Mr. Read wrote like a hysterical woman, to have the public on his side.

This is, of course, an example of a great fault in a great writer. Charles Read did an immense amount of good in his day, but it is impossible to measure the good he might have done had his methods been as wise as his meaning.

For our next month's exercise let each scholar find in a newspaper some article or opinion with which she disagrees—and either refute it, or express a contrary opinion. The article may be cut out and enclosed with the paper instead of being copied. The heading should state whether the paper is intended to disprove, or merely to disagree with the enclosure.

AT THE ST. JOHN'S WOOD ART SCHOOL.

How many memories has my recent visit to these Schools recalled, for some years ago, I, too, was a St. John's Wood student, and among the first who joined the life class when it was open to ladies in December, 1888. Then it was an extra, now it is included in the school course, and is under the direction of Mr. T. B. Kennington. Very little else is altered, the antique room is still the antique, yet signs of the change in art education are to be seen in the little groups where composition sketches are being done, or careful still-life studies are being made. It is here that the Academy work is done, and St. John's Wood has always been famous in passing more students than any other school, but as Mr. Ward said himself, every year there is less competition, for artists are finding they can progress quite as well, if not better, without the system, or non-system, in vogue in the R. A. Schools. Students trying for the Academy are allowed and sometimes required to work from the living model.

The day I saw the Schools the model in the ladies' life class was a beautiful dusky-skinned girl, who, if I mistake not, has sat more than once to Mr. Ernest Normand.

The head and costume model is worked alternately with the nude, and sketching compositions form a great point in the school training.

There are competitions every month, for which prizes are offered for figure, landscape and design. These are criticised by most of the leading artists of the day, among whom may be mentioned Luke Fildes, Seymour Lucas, Onslow Ford, Solomon, Hacker, Yeames, Burgess and Waterhouse.

Anatomy, of course, for that is required in the Royal Academy examination, is studied here, and all the needful objects in the way of skeletons and diagrams, &c., are supplied. Speaking of skeletons reminds me of the



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highly disrespectful way we used to treat the poor old bones, and I remember perfectly the arrival of a beautiful brand-new polished skull, because, as I was studying its wire-hinged jaws, the upper half of the cranium that had been sawn off and fastened on again by two dear little brass hooks, rolled off my lap on to the floor, and horror of horrors, the parietal and frontal bones parted; but, and I think I may confess it, for by now that ivory white skull must have gone the way of its fellows, with careful working those two serrated edges fitted together and no one was any the wiser. But all this is very frivolous, and I should not recommend students to play ball with the present skull, for the

nasal bone is always extremely delicate.

The Schools, which are large, are very conveniently situated, being only a few minutes' walk from St. John's Wood Station, and close to the Atlas Omnibus route. In the summer time the open asphalted Court round which the domestic parts are built is found very useful for Tennis during the luncheon hour, and is 'given over to the "sweet girl graduates"'; upstairs, in addition to the dressing-room, is another room where cocoa, tea or bovril can be heated. Besides being a school, 7 Elm Tree Road is also quite an artistic colony, for there Mr. Ward has his studio, and I was allowed a look at the secrets of the coming year, in the shape of a picture for the Royal Academy, on which he and his friend, Mr. Avery Lewis, were deeply engaged, and which treats

of that most interesting period, the "Viking Age"; several other interesting canvases were about, and among them—a charming rainbow-tinted Venus rising from the sea, but perhaps no more must



STUDENTS AT WORK.

be said about it at present. There is yet another studio that must be mentioned, a "delightful little workshop" "up two pairs of stairs," where the occupant, Miss C. Brain, who is also the Secretary, showed me some charming designs, studies and portraits.

Speaking of the "Viking Age," reminds me I had not mentioned that Wood-carving is also pursued in the schools, and that there is a room fitted up with a carpenter's bench for the use of students, where Mr. Ward sometimes works himself, and there he shewed me the model of a Viking ship he was then making; also another interesting object was a hand-loom for weaving, which a lady friend had brought from Sweden. Modelling in clay and wax also claims its share of attention.

Of the illustrations which accompany this article, the head is from a red chalk drawing by Miss M. McDonald, that was hung on the line in last year's Academy. The poster gives a good idea of the freedom allowed in the sketching competition for which the original was done, and the photograph of the School shows the painting-room with the students at work, and the model posed; also, the photographer, who was one of the students, has been able to give several of the studies in course of progress.

The Schools are open all the year round, and may only be entered between 9 and 10 a.m., or between the rests which last for five minutes after every hour, so the student

who arrives late must wait outside till that time, rather a bad rule in the summer I fear, for the lazy ones, for when the shady courtyard looks tempting it is so easy to be a few minutes late, especially if an interesting book be in the pocket. I believe this rule is rigidly adhered to now; when I was a student it was not enforced. But of course these remarks do not affect serious students, and it is to them only that the Principals are offering the Scholarship announced in the Sketching Club notices.

MAUD J. VYSE.



POSTER DESIGN.

DOCTORS.

BY LADY ROSALIND NORTHCOTE.

OF all the various properties that litter the average author's lumber-room none stand in greater need of speedy removal and decent burial than do certain superannuated lay figures. The Scotch gardener, with his red hair and yet more fiery temper; the milk-and-water curate, at whose shrine slipper offerings are so freely made; the dashing but brainless Guardsman, the bustling spinster, the drawling rustic, and the villainous billiard-marker—do not all these play their parts without one spark of life in story after story of the everyday order? *All* these characters, however, are not required for the elaboration of each thrilling tale. Two or three of them, as minor characters, suffice. But a doctor is, unhappily, wanted at nearly every turn of the wheel of Fate. An accident pure and simple, a dark-laid scheme of murder, a fishing village epidemic, leading to acts of very foolish heroism, an ill-starred shooting party, in fine, innumerable situations call for the presence of a medical man. This being so, it is time a protest be entered against the common description of this inevitable being. He is always one of a "type." And there is such a paucity of types!

Of course, I am not venturing to discuss the great works of the masters of fiction, past or present. That lies beyond the scope of this paper. No, my object is only to consider the amelioration of the condition of doctors—in fiction. The fiction, let all clearly understand, being of a popular and non-assuming kind. Still, there is a great deal of it, and much room for improvement lies therein.

A doctor emphatically is human, though perhaps the "c" may not always be added. To picture all the complexities of such human nature as is devoted to the science of healing, two types and a kind of hybrid are deemed sufficient; that is, in novels. In short stories one may come across three more automatons. But of these later.

The first two types figure as more or less important characters, and may be classified as the Humbug (alas! far the most commonly met with) and the Philanthropist (generally a dingy specimen).

The Humbug is large and sleek, well-dressed, and decorated with a big gold watch (a repeater), a heavy watch chain, and seals. He is pompous, and very often a snob. His manner is smooth, not to say oily; his smile bland, and occasionally he crowns his iniquities by enquiring how "we" do? The Humbug has neither pride nor interest in his profession. It is merely a means of money-making to him, and the more credulous are his patients, and the blinder is their faith in him, the more he rejoices over their folly. Fees, resulting from what he chuckles over as unnecessary visits and useless advice, fill him with the greatest glee. Trustful patients are the least likely to turn restive under bread pills and water coloured with cochineal. This physician favours the wishes of the invalid or the nurses, as the tide serves, the real good of the victim, short of letting him die on his hands, being the last consideration. His notions of truth are more hazy than those of even the majority of medical men, and he has become so used to deceiving people "for their own good," that a straightforward course never appears possible to him.

If he be a country-town doctor, he will be a noted gossip, and will drive a gig and give dinner parties. It is remarkable, by the way, that no country-town doctor can ever be marked for approbation. That is only possible to the dweller among slums or the man who lives in desolate, little-populated regions.

Next comes the Philanthropist. He is always spare and threadbare. If young, he will probably be burdened by a nervous stammer and a hesitating manner—at least, when not professionally engaged. Then his skill is incredible. If middle-aged, he is apt to be distinguished by abrupt speech, iron-grey hair and a keen countenance. An elderly philanthropic doctor is too rare to come into this catalogue. Either Death or *Les Con-*

DOCTORS.

sentences will have accounted for him before the coming of white hairs.

But outward appearance signifies little. The Philanthropists are all alike at heart, one salient point being a healthy hatred of all aristocracy and a determination to oppose the same whenever possible. Sometimes the Philanthropist becomes enamoured of a high-born damsel, an exception to her class; but then matters are always complicated by the ardent lover quarrelling with some male relative of his idol over the Game Laws, or a lease, or some other matter equally unsuited for the interposition of a doctor. Still, this only brings out his noble character the more.

Why he should despise the upper classes as a whole is not revealed, but to do so is the infallible sign of a true Philanthropist. He really is very devoted to the service of the poor, and proves it by hard work among them, though, somehow, this point is never impressively insisted on. A brief glance at Mr. Fildes' picture, "The Doctor," teaches the reality of the physician's interest and anxiety far more effectually than do pages of words, praising the exertions and sacrifices of many a medical hero, and written after an ordinary fashion.

The Hybrid is old, white-headed, and benevolent. He pats the heads of rosy-cheeked children, has a kind word for everybody, and owns a shaggy pony and a low pony-carriage. Frequently he is a bachelor, or a widower with a tender romance hidden by long years, and he always inhabits a village. Change his coat, and you have the beloved parish priest. Alter his raiment again, and he is M. le Curé, as known to English story-tellers. Hence his title.

All these personages have, at times, an almost perceptible flexibility, but in the three automaton of short stories the sameness is simply appalling. The respective labels have only to be looked at, and almost every word that each interesting gentleman will utter may be foretold.

Scotch, Irish, and the Experimentalist are the three.

The Scot is alliterative, and will be discovered sarcastic, though somewhat silent, skillful, and very often a ship's surgeon. He is slow in giving his opinion, and sententious in expressing it. Shrewd, sound, and sensible are adjectives nearly always applicable, and on rare occasions he shows himself sympathetic.

The Irishman is wild and reckless, and joyous of disposition. Very talented, and with flashes of genius, he has thrown away his chances for lack of industry, and not infrequently has turned to whiskey for consolation. We only meet him with his "future behind him." Usually he is encountered smoking his pipe in a rough and remote surgery beyond the edge of civilisation. Possibly he has an unamiable senior as well as an unenviable lot, but he is always cheerful and sometimes amusing.

Last, and certainly least worth consideration, comes the Experimentalist, for he is merely a machine through which experiments are effected. It depends on the author's interest in any given experiment whether he is more than a mere name. If the whole affair is entangled in the web of a love story, or if, at most, it is just an event helping forward the whole tale, the man of science is truly a nonentity. Should the experiment occupy a prominent place in the field of plot, he rises to the position of a useful adjunct to his laboratory. He is happiest should he chance to be a German specialist. Then who does not know him? Stout, big voice, big spectacles, stubby hair, bristly beard, fierce-mannered, and soft-hearted. He will talk broken English, embellished by numerous German ejaculations, in a guttural tone, but, at any rate, he may be recognised as an individual presumably once drawn from Nature, or a bad copy of that drawing, but the common experimentalist does not reach that level of humanity.

Here end the types. Would that they might really cease from crowding so many mimic stages!

There exist many societies for the preven-

tion of over-working animals, children, and other deserving objects of pity. Why does no one attempt the protection of worn-out lay figures? It would surely be a meritorious act. Doubly so, for the types would not only enjoy a well-earned rest, but the public would be relieved by the disappearance of physicians with whose every word they are only too familiar. And it is even possible that the old puppets being not available, their parts might be played by new doctors, possessing fresh characteristics, using a diversity of phrases, and, best of all, not bearing the impress of any type, but carrying the conviction that each is the representation of a real live man.

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LETTERS TO A DEBUTANTE BY A WOMAN OF THE WORLD.

7.—ON "LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM."

WOMAN in her relation to man will continue to provide themes for essayists as long as the world lasts. Courtship, marriage, divorce, or the happy and unhappy married life must of necessity interest us all, since there are none who can by any possibility be unaffected by these relationships. The behaviour of woman in her different phases, as the child, the maiden, and the developed woman, are of highest interest. When the sixth age shifts unhappily! Nothing you can say of her will matter much.

And in her relationship to man woman is indeed Protean! "Everything by turns and nothing long." Coy, reserved, forward, modest, bashful, simple, full of wiles, calculating, sincere, honest, a prey to passionate love, cold and unemotional. The woman who does not love her children is—by common consent recognised as an abnormal being. The woman who does not love her husband is, curiously enough, never placed in that category. Yet as woman of her own free will gives herself to the keeping of a strange man, it follows as a matter of course that

she shall have found something in that man which is responsive to her nature, and which makes her choice of him as a companion for life no matter for surprise. Consequently, when the love wanes, or appears never to have existed, the condition of things which remains (a life-long partnership with the motive for such partnership gone) is worse than unnatural. To err is epicene. Married life must naturally be full of ups and downs. Yet by far the larger proportion of marriages are happy ones. Few are ideal, and the majority may be described as of the jog-trot, kick-by-the-way order. Still, taking the average, not of society, but of our population, it must be confessed that the married state is happier than the single one, and the greater number of married people are reasonably and truly, if not ecstatically, happy. The modern and average man is an anthropomorphist as far as woman is concerned. He does not idealise her, he has ceased to worship her, he no longer makes woful ballad to her eyebrow; and he does not even propose now-a-days on his bended knees. He can find it in his irreverent, *fin-de-siècle* heart to "chaff" the object of his warmest affections. He is seldom sentimental, never romantic, and yet—in spite of all, there still exists a manly, chivalrous love than which nothing in life is better worth possessing.

An old saying has it that:

"There swims no goose so grey, but soon or late
She finds an honest gander for her mate,"

which, I take to mean that every woman, however ill-favoured, has, at some period or other of her life a chance of changing her state. That all do not choose to take advantage of this chance is certain, but the woman who has never been told that she is loved must indeed be a *rara avis*.

To the *debutante* love and marriage may come in her first year of entry into society; or she may have many avowals of love which she cannot reciprocate; or it may so chance that she have none at all until later. Great physical advantages count, unhappily, for most in the forces which lead man to find

LETTERS TO A DEBUTANTE.

love in his heart for woman. That the physical advantages count for less than the mental and moral in the long run, is also undeniable. Nevertheless, while man is man, golden hair and dazzling complexions, deep brown eyes and symmetry of feature will attract and stimulate love more than the amiable disposition of a patient Griselda, or the force of character of a Queen Elizabeth, or the attainments of an Olympia Morata. Hence my deduction is, that those endowed with beauty or palpable charm are more generally sought after in marriage early in their lives than they who base their chief claim for attractiveness on less patent but more durable qualifications.

To know yourself loved by the man you love is exquisite happiness, and nothing in after life can compare with it. It is like profanity to write of such idyllic and solemn moments, and they come not only to those who are in their salad days, but happily, to people of mature years as well.

But even though engaged to the man of her affections, the *débutante's* path is not altogether strewn with roses. Misunderstandings are sure to arise between two people, comparatively speaking, strangers to each other. It is long before a complete grasp of one another's character is arrived at; and people often shew little patience with short-comings they fail to understand. One may be exigent and impetuous, fiery and impatient; the other provokingly lackadaisical and indolent, ever inclined to adopt in life a passive *rôle*, which is trying and irritating to the one of action and energy. Again, one may be full of enthusiasm and generous impulses, the other cynical and apt to treat honest enthusiasm as childish. He may chance to love the country and sport, and fresh air; she may adore the excitement of Piccadilly. Arguments arise, sometimes obstinacy and temper are shown, occasionally estrangements ensue; and all this between two people who have elected to spend their lives together, and who look forward to happiness in so doing. If ever in life need

exists for mutual forbearance it is when people stand in the relation to each other of betrothed husband and wife. Later in life with years comes philosophy—not infrequently judgment and patience, but these are hard to find in conjunction with extreme youth. Not the least trying moments are those when, together before a critical public the newly declared love is discussed or observed. Nothing is worse form than brandishing a love in the face of others; being demonstratively affectionate or assertively conspicuous. At the same time, I know of few things more charming than the shy happiness which modestly seeks to hide itself and which yet unconsciously breaks forth in smiles and radiant looks and tender glances. There are those who affect a studied indifference to each other in public; a coldness of demeanour which they are very far from feeling. Such affectation is unnatural and absurd. As the French say:—

“L'amour et la jalousie ne peuvent se cacher.”

It deceives no one to pretend indifference where the affections are naturally expected to be engaged. Anything unnatural is in bad taste. Nature carried to extremes is equally offensive. The happy medium is that wherein people are simple and natural; free from exaggeration, self-controlled and content to be happy without claiming the sympathy of the whole world in that happiness. And, indeed, my *débutante*, the girl who is truly and wholly and honestly in love regards her future husband as towering above his kind as much as ever did “Triton among minnows.” To such as she, the music of her lover's voice is sweeter than stringed instruments. His presence makes the world full of sunshine. His absence causes it to look grey and gloomy. With him the true hearted woman can face adversity and poverty. Without him, riches and rank, and pleasures are as nothing. There is no boon greater than the gift of a “good man's love”—and:

*“Nothing, half so sweet in life
As love's young dream.”*



The Sun upon the Lake is low,
The wild Birds hush their Song;
The Hills have Evening's deepest Glow,
Yet Leonard tarrys long.

Sir W Scott

H. BALLERLE



VIVELAI (RHYTHME D'ALAIN CHARTIER).

Above the storming of the winter sea
 Beneath the leaden gloomy sky
 There came a message from thy heart to me
 Telling of Love, though grieved by misery.
 "Oh, trust me, Sweetheart, ever I am
 thine!"

The bright Spring came, with flowers; the
 daisy,
 Crocuses, buttercups and coltsfoot wee,
 Celandines studded all the grassy lea;
 My heart sent back an answer unto thee:
 "I am thine always, e'en as thou art
 mine!"

Summer advanced, and at each day's decline
 I watched the silent moon smile out and
 shine,
 And counted waiting stars each night to
 nine;*
 Life, once so calm, seemed flushed with
 August's wine,
 And all my future wrapped in mystery.

Autumn's gold days with golden fruit, the
 sign
 Of golden harvest, passed in haste; in fine
 Calm Autumn died:—and so didst thou;
 supine
 With weariness, I still deem life divine:—
 Love counts not seasons, but eternity.

* It is an old superstition that if a girl counts nine stars every evening for a week, she will meet the man she is going to marry within a fortnight.

AN old friend in a new and sumptuous guise is *Who's Who*, for 1897 (A. & C. Black, 3s. 6d.); one extends to it the proverbial welcome given to a poor relation on his unexpected accession to wealth, for the threadbare lists of past years have suddenly blossomed into miniature biographies, mostly written by the subjects themselves, and embracing not only the titled and official classes, but everyone of any consequence in Art, Literature, and the Drama. No longer limited to the needs of newspaper offices and begging-letter writers, the volume appeals in interest to all classes, and gives in vivid snapshots the antecedents, tastes and careers of not only great names, but of all those younger workers who have in any way justified their inclusion. It is a monument to the industry and wide personal knowledge of Mr. Douglas Sladen, who is responsible for the production: few figures are more familiar in literary London, and in such hands it is not surprising to find the world of books very fully represented. One of the most fascinating features is the list, in each case, of the favourite recreations of public favourites; thus Mrs. Lynn Linton's tastes turn to "embroidery, reading, the garden," while Edna Lyall prefers "yachting," and Miss Corelli, "reading, music, and theatre," Mrs. Hodgson Burnett's chief pleasure is in "improving the lot of children," and Mr. Hall Caine in riding and mountaineering, "but both sparingly." Sir Henry Irving's recreation is "acting," and the Rev. W. Carlile's "open-air preaching." Many ladies have admitted to the cycling epidemic, such as Mrs. Jopling, Sarah Grand, and Nora Vynne. *Who's Who*, in its present form will be invaluable to all

literary aspirants, serving not only as a directory and guide to publishers and periodical literature, but also giving an insight into the ages and dispositions of those who hold the reins.

SUNRISE SAPPHICS.

When the darkness fades and the morning
wakens,
When the tide-wave turns, then on ebbing
waters
Spirits leave their earth-homes, and in the
dawning
Welcome their freedom!

Over all the hush and the spell of day-
break—
Subtle, mystic—but when the pale light
deepens,
Streams and mountains, snow-wastes and
flowered meadows
Spring from the darkness.

Human souls no more now beat 'gainst
the cage-bars!
But unfettered dart on the wings of morning
Through the dewy azure, by rose-flushed
cloud-bank
Into the sunrise.

HILDEGARDE WREN.

AMONG my round of visits to the studios on Show Sunday, I went into Mr. Calderon's Art School, in Elm Tree Road, St. John's Wood, and saw some very good work ready for sending in to the Royal Academy. Notably, the "Return of the Viking," by B. G. Ward and Avery Lewis, which was very strong, and good in colour; also "Early Spring Sunset," Avery Lewis, very poetical in its grey tone and still water; and B. G. Ward's "Venus Anodyomine," most effective, well drawn, and bold in brushing.

Among the other examples, I was struck by "A Farm," by E. F. Welts, which had good sunlight effect; "In varying moods," A.

Leicester Burroughs, full of character; and a Landscape, by Geo. Hewitt.

A black and white head, "Dora," by A. Flachfeld, struck me as being very nice and full of poetical feeling. There were many others, also good, but space will not permit me to mention them.

MISS MARIA DAWSON, a student of the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire, and of Aberdare Hall, Cardiff, has recently been awarded an 1851 Exhibition Scholarship for Research in Science of the value of £150 per annum for two years.

Miss Dawson, daughter of Mr. Alfred Dawson, of Brockley, was born in 1875. She was educated at the Roan School for girls, Greenwich, under Miss Blackmore, the then Head Mistress. While at school she obtained first class honours in both the Junior and Senior Cambridge Local Examinations, and was awarded the Roan School Leaving Exhibition in 1892, in which year she entered Aberdare Hall, obtaining also an Exhibition on the result of the Entrance Scholarship examination of the University College, Cardiff. In 1893 she passed the Matriculation examination of the University of London in the Honours Division, in 1894, the Intermediate Science examination (first division) of the same University. In June, 1896, Miss Dawson passed the Final examination for the B.Sc. Degree of the University of Wales, and is the first and only graduate of that University. In October, 1896, she took the B.Sc. Degree of the University of London.

The condition attached to the 1851 Exhibition Scholarships is that the research undertaken must have some bearing upon the industries of the country. Miss Dawson will in October next proceed to Cambridge, where she is to work under Professor Marshall Ward, her subject being "Nitrogen and the Nodules of Leguminous Plants." Meanwhile she is to return for the summer term to Cardiff to continue Botanical work with Mr. A. H. Trow, Lecturer in Botany at the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire.

Miss Dawson, with other women students coming from English schools, has benefited by the tradition recognised in Wales of giving equality of advantages in education to women and men. Of these advantages Welsh women are in increasing numbers availing themselves, as year by year the Principality is becoming better supplied with good Secondary Schools. In the University of Wales this tradition of equality is maintained, every examination and every honour being open to women. A full course for the Degree of this University involves a minimum three years' residence after matriculation. The condition of residence as a qualification is imposed. Hence

BROWN OWL.

the Degrees are a guarantee that the student has shared in the advantages of College life, and they are more than mere examination certificates. Its Academic courses allow of the choice between diversity of subject, and a high degree of specialisation.

GARDENING.

ANNOIUS AMATEUR. It is quite true that you may use weak stimulants in solution with advantage to Ferns and Indian Rubbers, but only occasionally, during the spring and summer when the pots are full of roots.

A. E. F. The seedlings of Marvel of Peru should be planted out in the garden, about the middle of May. They form tubers in the same manner as dahlias: in autumn when the flowers are passed, lift the tubers and store in sand during the winter, to plant out again in May.

M. E. H. Yes, Pansies are easily propagated from seeds or cuttings, and bloom in a few weeks. Sow in the open air from May to September. They do well in rich moist soil, with plenty of air and water.

YOUNG GARDENER. Make your four-feet bed up in May, rake the surface fine, and sow the seeds of any hardy perennials in rows six inches apart, across the bed, thin the plants out as soon as they are large enough, and plant them in other beds similarly prepared, to strengthen, giving them plenty of room and plenty of water. Keep them clear of weeds, and by September you will have a good stock of strong plants.

THE Women's University Settlement in South London is making an interesting experiment "in the hope of raising the standard of social work for the poor," by providing a systematic preparation for paid and honorary workers. The course of training extends for one year, with the option of a second year for those who wish to obtain a more complete knowledge of some special branch. The method pursued includes lectures, papers, and readings, supplemented by practical work. A few days each week during the first six months are devoted to Charity Organisation Committees, and the remainder of the time in connection with one or other of the numerous activities of the Settlement. During the second half of the training, facilities are provided for observing the work of other societies and institutions, and special attention is to be devoted to some particular branch of work, according to the future plans of the student. The students may be resident or otherwise, the former giving practically the whole of their time, and the latter at least four days a week. Resident students are received for an inclusive charge of £50 per annum, while the fee for non-residents is £10.

THE name of Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania must surely be familiar to many readers of *ATALANTA* as holding the first place amongst American Colleges for Women. Attention has been recently drawn to this institution by the publication of a handbook compiled by the Graduate Club of Bryn Mawr, whose president, it is pleasant to note, is a lady with an English degree, giving information of the courses open to women in British, Continental and Canadian Universities. Particulars are given as to the courses open to women in each University, length of sessions, names of professors, and the cost of tuition. It would seem that Americans of both sexes generally prefer Continental to British Universities. Amongst the foreign Universities open to women are those of Paris, Heidelberg, Göttingen, Freiburg, Athens, Spain, and Italy. The lecturers at American Women's Colleges often go to Greece during the "sabbath" year of holiday, with full salary, which many of the American Institutions wisely and generously accord. Bryn Mawr College itself consists of four spacious halls of residence, a very completely furnished gymnasium, and a science hall. Taylor Hall, which occupies a central position on high ground contains the chapel, libraries, reading and lecture rooms. There is a swimming tank which measures 75 feet by 25 feet; the grounds cover about fifty acres. The required studies for the B.A. degree comprise two years of English, one year of philosophy, two years of science (or one year of science and one year of history). In the English course three of the five hours' work consist of lectures on English Literature; the two other hours are devoted to work with the English readers, who instruct in the art of essay-writing. Nine resident fellowships of the value of \$520 (or about £106) are conferred annually on the candidates who have each studied longest in the particular subject for which the fellowship is offered or whose work shows distinct promise. It is interesting to know that Englishwomen are frequently successful in obtaining these fellowships. It may be of interest to readers of *ATALANTA* to learn that English Literature is especially well taught at Bryn Mawr College. The authorities mostly aim at a wide and general rather than a narrow and detailed knowledge of the subject; and amongst other work, the principal nineteenth century poets are specially studied.

It is said that a movement is on foot to establish a Ladies' residential Club in a central locality in London, in which, by paying about 15s. a week, a cubicle bedroom, breakfast and late dinner would be provided. For 25s. a week a woman could obtain two rooms furnished after the style prevalent in women's colleges.

A TALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

"DO GREAT RICHES TEND TO HAPPINESS?"

Of course they do, if they are used well. There is no greater fallacy than the idea that so many thousands of pounds mean so many drawbacks to a well ordered, happy, life. Great riches mean great facilities for doing good; in doing good lies the secret of happiness. It is a truism to say that scant means will not make a naturally discontented man contented, whilst there is a chance that affluent circumstances may improve his mind. As for a contented one, he will be satisfied in all conditions, and who shall say, not more completely satisfied when the sordid anxieties of life have no power to assail him. It is another question whether great wealth tends to make its possessor great, and it may well be argued that luxury dulls ambition. But ambition is not always a sweetener of life, nay, it often brings out the lower part of human nature; encouraging envy, jealousy, and kindred passions, which mar the happiness of a man's intercourse with his fellows. Again, the possession of wealth will not hinder innate greatness on its path to fame, but rather help it on its way. "Happiness is all in the mind," says an oft repeated proverb. "The mind is its own place," says our Puritan poet. Yet, surely that golden emolument, which is the gift from Heaven (given to be used for the good of mankind, so often withdrawn when spent on selfish pleasures) is not to be despised.

HARRIETTE E. KENNEDY.

On the contrary, they tend to dispel it. Wealthy men consider it a legitimate occupation to seek Happiness, and she, fleeing before them, eludes their grasp. To many the power of giving is great happiness, but as often as not it degenerates into a duty more or less palatable, and accepted by the recipient as such. Yet wealth is power. On all that is most beautiful in Art or Nature the rich may gaze. All those glittering, dazzling pleasures that poor men sigh in vain after, are within their grasp. But sooner or later the rose-tinted life becomes black-hued; the golden fruit turns to Dead Sea ashes; satiety sets in, and the world seems dark and dreary because there is nothing new to see or to experience. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter . . ." How be unselfish when selfishness has become second nature? How appreciate simple pleasures when even magnificence palls? Those small acts of self-sacrifice, half divine, half laughable, that sweeten poorer lives, are to the wealthy unknown—before they frame their wish it is gratified. "If we were only better off!" sighs many a poor soul, whose work is never done, who has to make fourpence do the work of a shilling, whose dreams at night are of unpaid bills. "Courage Lazarus; it is better to struggle and endure, to love and suffer, than to yawn one's life away! 'Tis better to be free than loaded with chains—though those chains be of gold. Perhaps the angels find more broken hearts clothed in purple, than among those who pass through life in simpler garb."

J. FENTON BOYSON.

I do not think that great riches in themselves bring any great happiness to anyone. It is the amount of good which great riches may do, which is, or ought to be, the cause of happiness. The feeling of a trust well-fulfilled, of work well done, of responsibilities well borne, which must inevitably bring the greatest feeling of happiness. Of course, great riches must necessarily bring much anxiety and many cares, and the possessor of a large amount of worldly wealth is beset by trials and worries of which his poorer brethren know nothing. Unquestionably, the possession of great riches brings more happiness than a lack of them. Happy is the man who has never experienced the pinch of poverty, the terrible feeling of not knowing where the rest is to come from, the souring effects of long denial of everything which makes life pleasant, which are the cause of so much unhappiness in this world. True, the poor man has no responsibilities worth speaking of, but then, he never knows the happiness which is the rich man's. To my mind, neither the possession of great riches, nor a lack of riches bring happiness, but rather a happy medium in which one has a little more than enough, when one has not to think of every penny before spending, and in which the responsibilities only match the power of doing good.

NELLIE PHILLIPS.

Yes, great riches *do* tend to happiness. Who can deny this fact when so much of the misery in this world is caused by poverty? Many people will substitute the word "vice" for poverty, but the question arises: "Would there be half the vice in the world if there were less poverty, if the poorest of the poor were not driven to drink and despair because their homes are not fit to live in, because the few pence they earn cannot feed them or keep them sufficiently warm?" One does not naturally teach a child that riches tend to happiness, because the child-mind cannot grasp what great powers wealth possesses—powers where Self is *not* first—a vision of toy-shops comes before it, and as it grows older it is inclined to get selfish and greedy. The tremendous amount of good to be done with great wealth proves it to be in itself a great blessing, and one of the largest responsibilities God lays on man. If it be understood that happiness comes by helping those who need help, surely, there is a way of finding work for the unemployed! Remembering that there is ever before him a vast struggling crowd of humanity, the rich man need never be idle or lazy. There are hundreds of men and women at this present moment (*not* the very poor), who have brains, intellect, talent, everything in fact to help them in the world except money. Men and women to whom charity funds, and collections, are of no avail because they are what is called the "middle class," and are supposed to be able to help themselves. Is there not a pathway made for the rich man here: where, *not* represented by his secretary, he can give on either side of the abundance which he possesses, giving where it is *really* needed, but always remembering that these riches are not a gift from the Maker for his own personal use, but a great and solemn trust? It is a great thing to have money to help our friends with *as well as* sympathy and affection. Even if the cares and troubles of wealth are many, are not the blessings still greater, and is it not happiness to cause the smile which lightens up the poor tired faces of our suffering brothers and sisters?

MURIEL LINDLEY RANKIN.

ATALANTA CLUB.

Subject for May: "Do changes in fashion affect women mentally and morally?" Papers must not exceed more than *two hundred and fifty words*, and must be sent in on or before May 25th. Prizes of five shillings will be awarded to each of the four best papers, which will be published in the body of the Magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

Describe an imaginary Quaker courtship. An essay on what you consider the greatest event of the Queen's reign. Write an original Vivelai (example given in this number). Essays must not exceed 500 words. The subject for the School of Journalism will be found on page 476. All papers must be sent in on or before May 25th. Members may only enter for one of these subjects. Full rules for the above will be found among the advertising pages at the end of this number.

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (APRIL).

I.

1. Priests who went to a distance to baptize or marry, carrying the mass-book in their breasts.

2. St. Cuthbert's beads are the *Entrochi* found among the rocks at Lindisfarne, supposed to be forged at an anvil during the night, by St. Cuthbert.

II.

1. The Duke of Buckingham. 2. Dryden.
3. Dryden.

III.

1. Amphibian Browning. 3. Three sonnets on sorrow Philip Bourke Marston.

IV.

1. The place where the Whango, a river of Tibet, rises. There are there more than a hundred springs, which sparkle like stars.

2. From the skin of the sheep of Tartary.

V.

1. Thomas Parnell—author of the "Hermit," 1679-1717.

2. Sir Charles Sedley. 3. William Cullen Bryant.

VI.

1. "Why do we then shun death with anxious strife?

If light can thus deceive, wherefore not life?"
"To-night"—Joseph Blanco White.

2. "Far hence wide waters feed the vines and corn,
Pass on small stream, to so great purpose born,
On to the distant toil, the distant rest."
"The Brook Rhine"—Augustus Webster.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR MAY.

I.

1. Who was the writer of the poem called "The character of a happy life"?

2. What is the origin and meaning of a "God's-pennie"?

II.

1. What is meant by the term "heiding-hill"?

2. What is the modern term for the old English word "juncates"?

3. Where does the quotation—
"O, jealousy!
Thou tyrant, tyrant of the mind,"
come from?

III.

1. What was the ancient name of Ireland?

2. What are "Beal-fires"?

IV.

1. What custom is alluded to in the term, "Rending the eyes with painting"?

2. Whose are these lines?—
"Servant of God, well done!
Rest from thy loved employ;
The battle fought, the victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy."
3. For whom were they written?

V.

Give authors of quotations—

1. "In summer time when flowers do spring,
And birds sit on each tree,
Let lords and knights say what they will,
There's none so merry as we."

2. "Of all the torments, all the cares,
With which our lives are curst,
Of all the plagues a lover bears,
Sure rivals are the worst."

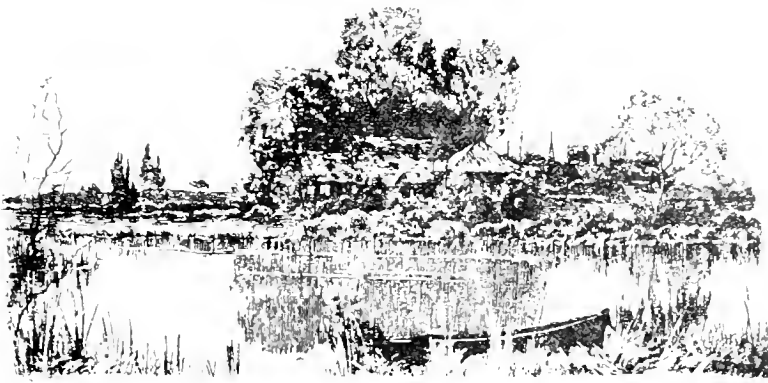
VI.

And these—

1. "Be hushed, be hushed, ye bitter winds!
Ye pelting rains, a little rest;
Lie still, lie still, ye busy thoughts,
That wring with grief my aching breast."

2. "The parent oak his stately head,
Majestic in his forest rears;
Lord of the woods his branches spread,
Proud monarch of a thousand years."

3. "Give me the mind that mocks at care,
The heart, its own defender;
The spirits that are light as air,
And never beat surrender."



T HE LONG AGO.

Alone I dream in the twilight hour
Of the long ago,
I see it pass like a glowing page,
The grief subdued by a softened age,
The joy enriched by the subtle power
Of the long ago,
I see a child with a sunny face
In the long ago,
His eyes with a new-born wonder shine,
His heart is touched with a light divine—
No sin can soil the tender grace
Of the long ago,
Then pass a man and a maid, serene
In the long ago,
No cloud can dim the dream of bliss,
No thought of doubt in that lover's kiss—
And I sigh to think what might have been
In the long ago,
I stand alone by a small, white bed
In the long ago,
I watch and wait with a sobbing breath
For the last, faint call of the angel Death,
And my heart lies dead by that still, pale head
In the long ago,
Ah! why is the world more lone and cold
Than the long ago?
It ne'er can gain that hallowed glow,
When pain is pleasure and joy is woe,
Till Time this day has backward rolled,
To the long ago.

LEARUS.



UNE FAMILLE MALHEUREUSE.

SWEETHEARTS AND FRIENDS.

CHAPTER IV.

"Indi i monti Ligustici e Riviera
Che con aranci e sempre verdi mirti,
Quasi avendo perpetua primavera
Sparge per l'aria, ben olenti spirti."

ARIOSTO.

"AMONGST other important events occurring since we last met," Lester said, in the course of this delightful mountain walk, "I have become a parent—by adoption."

"A parent?"

"Yes; I have come in for a legacy of a little girl, five years old."

"Really? What *will* you do with her?"

"What indeed, Miss Amy?"

An artist, friendless, penniless, dying, in Pisa, had sent for his old college friend, or rather acquaintance, and confided his motherless child to his charity. Lester could not conceive why he, a former acquaintance, lost sight of for so many years, had been chosen by the dying man as his child's guardian. But Amy, with affectionate pride in her friend, thought she knew why. The adventure seemed highly characteristic of her Bayard, her knight without fear and without reproach. It could have happened to no one else.

Presently they reached some broken ground with blocks of sandstone scattered amongst a sparse vegetation of juniper bushes and blooming heather, and saw the carriage waiting under some olives, when suddenly they heard a faint cry, and, looking up, saw the slight figure of a girl with a pretty face and shining golden hair, running laughing down a steep descent. A vision of ideal loveliness seemed to be descending from the blue above, in this fairly-fashioned figure flitting down the rough steep in sunshine. Seeing the stranger, she tried to stop, caught her foot in some heather and fell. Amy and Lester ran to her: Amy lifted her head and supported it.

"Any pain?" she asked in a matter-of-fact voice that Quixotic Lester thought hard.

"My foot," she sighed, with a little shudder. The laughing, pink-flushed face was white as marble, the delicate mouth drawn with pain. Lester thought it the most lovely face he had ever seen.

"Bear up, Letty, don't faint," Amy said, laying the drooping head with its loosened hair softly on some heather, while she examined the foot, appearing no more moved by her friend's suffering than if a butterfly's wing had been dusted. Had she screamed or fainted, the Immaculate would have liked her better. But she actually laughed. "Why you silly little thing!" she exclaimed, "your foot is all right. See if you can stand."

"Oh, I can't, Amy, I know I can't," replied the patient, turning away and hiding her face.

"She is fainting," cried Lester, raising her very carefully in his arms.

"She had better not let me see her faint. There is a nice cool well down there, Miss Letty, if you want to faint. Mr. Lester, I think you and I can carry her to the carriage."

Speechless with indignation, he lifted the girl's light figure in his arms, carrying her carefully and easily over the broken ground to the carriage, in which Louisa Stanley and Grace Langton were waiting. "Could you meet Mr. Lester under more appropriate circumstances?" said Louisa in an undertone as he reached the vehicle with his charming burden, and placed the patient carefully in the carriage, whence she gave him a grateful look from eyes "grey as glass."

"Oh, Miss Langton, I did not recognise you at first in this garb. How are you?" he said, able now to raise his hat and do all that was proper, while wondering at his former admiration for this wasted worn woman.

"No longer Miss Langton, Sister Avis," she corrected with a wan smile. "No doubt you wonder what business I have out in the world. I am sent for health."

It was quite late when the Immaculate

reached his hotel at Col Aprico. Shadows were slanting, the sea was tinged with purple. A little dark figure, two little dark figures, were in the hotel garden, looking out anxiously. One was four-footed and first perceived his approach, flying out with short, joyous barks, and scurrying along the dusty road to meet him. This was Nep, the dead artist's retriever, who had transferred his second-best affections to his dead master's friend and successor, the first being reserved for Angela. While he was yet in a perfect agony of whining, barking and tail-wagging, his little mistress, whose feet had meanwhile borne her less swiftly along the sunny road, arrived with streaming hair and out-stretched arms, followed by an anxious scolding nurse, and added her caresses to the dog's. Lester lifted her in his arms, kissed her and carried her back to the hotel.

"I thought you were dead, Carino," said the child in broken Italian. "I thought the wolves had eaten you."

"The Signorina has cried for two hours and eaten no dinner," added Perpetua, the nurse. Vivian felt the little arms round his neck, and thought he had a good legacy.

Col Aprico is a health resort not very far from Mentone and at no great distance from Genoa. There Lester had rooms with a sunny outlook, in the "Montone d'oro," while seeking a more suitable cage for his bird. Not far from the "Montone d'oro," a little higher up, on the sunny slope that gave its name to Col Aprico, was Villa Dole' Acqua, a boarding-house or *pension* kept by a maternal German lady, who exercised a kindly, if tyrannical, supervision over her invalids of many nations, and under whose benevolent wing the Langtons' party had taken refuge.

No sooner had the carriage turned the corner of the road and vanished from the sight of her gallant deliverer than Lettice Marshall's faintness disappeared; she sat up and asked with interest how it was that Mr. Lester contrived to appear so

unexpectedly and so opportunely on the spot. "I think, Amy, you might have introduced him," she added.

"You saved me the trouble. Nothing could have been more perfect than your mutual introduction to one another."

"The Immaculate will cherish a life-long gratitude to Lettice for appearing in the character of distressed damsel," added Louisa Stanley.

"It is fortunate that Letty's faints never occur when she is out of reach of masculine succour," Amy observed.

"At all events, I neglected this opportunity," replied Lettice, sweetly, "and you must acknowledge that it was a good one."

"It would have been a pity to waste a faint," returned Amy, acidly, "when a twisted foot did quite as well."

"I forgive you, dear," said Lettice, with imperturbable sweetness. "I admit that it was unkind to disturb that very interesting *tête-à-tête*. I should have kept discreetly out of the way. But why do you call him the Immaculate? Carrie says he is not priggish, only perfect."

"Without any humbug, what a good fellow he is!" Amy exclaimed, in her impulsive way. "Fancy a young man like that burdening himself with a little destitute child! Isn't it just like our Bayard, Grace?"

"He was always kind, Amy."

"Well, really this *is* a revelation. A man exists whom Amy admires," murmured Lettice. "And does he admire you?" she added.

"Oh, no. He has the greatest horror of medical women."

"And yet you are devoted to him? How touching! What a thing it is to be clever and strong, and to have platonic friendships."

All the pleasure Amy felt in meeting The Immaculate once more, all the innocent happiness she had expressed to and of him seemed to have vanished. She did not know why, but she wished he had not come to Col Aprico.

Next morning Lester, with the little dark-eyed child and big black dog, strolled up to Villa Dole' Acqua. A gate between two square massive pillars led to an alley formed by similar pillars, bearing creepers trained across from pillar to pillar. Between the pillars on one side the eye ranged over a lemon-orchard in bloom, and thence down green declivities to the dark calm sea. The child danced at his side, clinging to his hand and gazing up in his face while she prattled in the Italian that came quickly, yet brokenly, to her lips, and of which he could only occasionally catch meaning, to the amusement and anger of the child, who laughed at his stupidity, and punished him with pinches.

"Did you pinch your father like that?" he asked, in his difficult Italian.

"No," replied Angela; "he was not a fool. He understood."

"You are naughty," he said, looking severely at the small creature. "If you pinch or say 'fool' again I shall—whip—you."

Bursting into a shout of laughter, the imp ran to play with Nep. "You are too much afraid of hurting," she cried, derisively.

The Immaculate felt that this was wrong; he was puzzled. They met a pale young Frenchman arm-in-arm with a hectic Swede, two more of Frau von Stein's "children" on their way, and, turning a corner beneath a small cliff of bare rock partially covered by creepers and climbing geraniums, entered a sunny flowery cove with garden seats and tables. Here Amy and Lettice were playing ball with green lemons, aiming at each other's faces. The Immaculate, surprised to see yesterday's patient so agile, greatly admired the spectacle, which was very pleasant and picturesque, involving swift, graceful postures, flushed cheeks, sparkling eyes, and gusts of laughter. Amy could do wonderful things on the horizontal bar, and tie herself into true lover's knots; Lettice had scarcely lost the supple grace of childhood. Thus they were very quick and deft at the game, like Nausicaa and her maidens playing at ball by this very sea. He assumed that the injured foot was healed.

"Oh, it was never really hurt," Lettice replied, laughing and pushing her bright hair into place. "What a little coward I am! My foot ached, and I turned faint, and thought I was half-killed; that was all."

"We don't expect ladies to be very brave," replied the chivalrous Lester. "They are not made of iron."

"Ah! how refreshing to hear that," returned Lettice, with her lovely smile. "I'm scolded all day long for cowardice and folly. I don't want to be wise and brave. I like to be petted and taken care of."

"How natural and how charming!" he thought, dazzled by the laughing blue-grey eyes.

"I ought to thank you for your kindness yesterday," continued Lettice. "I must have made your arms ache."

"Not in the least. So glad and proud to have been of service."

"Is this your legacy?" asked Amy, looking towards the child.

"What a little sweet!" cried Lettice, opening her arms. "Come and speak to me, dear."

"Go, Angela," Lester said, in Italian; but she turned to her protector, clasping him by the knee and hiding her face.

"Don't tease her," Amy said. "Poor mite, does she speak no English?"

"A little. She is only five," replied Vivian, stroking the dark curls against his knee. "Miss Amy, I am glad to see you in such beautiful spirits this morning. Come, Angela, come." Angela declined to unclasp her hands and show her face, till Amy addressed her in Italian, when she at once lifted her head, looked in Amy's face, and ran to her.

Lettice flitted on to warn Frau von Stein of a stranger's approach, and so give her time to make herself presentable. The others followed, Nep stalking behind, surveying the three with critical approval. Amy wore what Lester called her "prophetic face"; she smiled upon the child with calm compassionate sadness. This prophetic

mood that amused him in old times was now somewhat awe-inspiring. She had grown so tall, and was known to be so learned. After all, it was well that she had chosen a self-dependent, if unfeminine, life. Could any man love a being so strong, so superior, so capable? On the other hand, who could fail to respect her, or who would not like to have so true and sure a heart to rely on in time of need?

"There is a nun!" cried Angela, dashing forward and pointing through some shrubs at the figure of Grace sitting by some myrtles, her face bent over a red-edged book.

"Come back, Angela," Amy said. "Fancy having to say special prayers for every hour of the day! Imagine breaking the time of a thinking being into tyrannical chips like that! No study is possible; very few occupations."

"But cannot Sister Avis understand that such things are bad for her health?"

"Certainly not. Sister Avis renounced the conduct of her understanding, though Grace Langton is heartily sick of monotonous prayer-grinding. My sister is a slave, Mr. Lester."

"Who is free?" he asked. Once he had yearnings for a conventual life himself; he had worn a spotless surplice, and lifted a seraphic voice with seraphic looks and genuine devotion. "Is Dr. Amy Langton quite unfettered?"

Frau von Stein and a detachment of her children were discovered on the verandah, enjoying the sunshine; the good Frau in a clean morning cap and newly-washed hands. These Accentric English are full of small prejudices—about clean hands for instance—as if hands could be clean in the morning, when every good Hausfrau is busy with dusters and pots and pans. Lester addressed her in his best German, to the joy of a young man from the Fatherland, sitting by a fair pale Swiss girl, whose accent he was trying to improve; a blonde Danish girl joined in the German that Louisa and Amy spoke well; Frau von Stein's consumptive niece could feel the breath of German air on her face.

The ladies of Villa Dole' Acqua were interested in the pretty child, Italian by birth-place, by her mother, by her dark eyes and hair, her speech and her breeding. But Angela did not respond. The German, which she considered as a hideous kind of intensified English, frightened her, so did the Italian upon which some of her Teutonic friends ventured. She clung to Vivian and Amy alternatively and was not to be beguiled by bon-bons. Nep sat on the gravel in front of the verandah, his paws stretched out before him, and looked on with benevolent condescension. But when Lettice attempted to draw the child to her by force he growled and Lester warned her in German that he was dangerous.

"Pray don't speak German to me," replied Lettice, "I never could understand, much less speak, anything but English."

"Why should you?" he wondered, thinking it quite enough pleasure to hear her voice. Frau von Stein loved these mad Englishmen and made this one welcome, though he worried and confused her by handing cups and chairs and opening doors for her "like a servant"; therefore the Immaculate became a frequent and welcome visitor at the *pension*. Sometimes he stayed in the garden, sometimes he accompanied those who were strong enough to walk up the mountain path. One bright morning when Lettice and Amy were setting out on such an excursion, he asked to join them with his pets. Higher up they found better views and brighter flowers for Angela, who adorned Nep with collars of violets and daffodils, which he wore with his accustomed dignity.

"Amy's strength is something frightful," Lettice observed, pausing in the ascent, leaning on Lester's arm, which had already saved her one or two slips. "She is actually carrying that child."

"I think her strength admirable," he replied, glad that no such strength deprived him of the pleasure of supporting the fairy-like creature upon his arm. "How lightly she springs up the path. It is like looking

at some statue of Pallas or Hera, in which strength is so lost in beauty that we feel rather than observe it, while the whole effect is one of calm perfection."

Lettice shot a momentary glance from her bright eyes to his. "I never thought of Amy in connection with statues," she returned slowly with a thoughtful air. Her chief notion about statues was that they were deficient in clothing. "But people see things so differently, and *friendship* is sometimes a little blind. Knowing this clever Amy must make you look down upon the rest of us, who like pleasure and dress, and are frightened to death at—Ai! Ai!" she screamed as a little green frog hopped across the narrow path.

He looked at her but said nothing, lest he should say too much; he was falling so swiftly under the spell of her exquisite loveliness. The glance revealed much, too much; but Lettice wanted more, she wanted the direct homage of words.

"Ah!" she sighed with a hurt look, "You are too kind to wound me by saying what you think."

The fish immediately swallowed the bait. "I could say nothing that would wound you—" he began, and stopped, intoxicated. "Do you know," he continued after a pause, "that weakness is—loveable? Weakness is a woman's greatest charm."

She was highly amused at these remarks. "You are saying wicked things, for which Amy would kill you," she laughed in her silver treble.

"Is Miss Langton so terrible?" he asked, smiling. Just then Amy turned on her upward path, the laughing child in her arms, and looked down upon the pair below. She saw the look upon Lester's face, a transfiguring expression almost religious, and a spasm shot through her. "There is no doubt about it," she thought. But why should that grieve her? "Surely," she mused, "it is well; for Lettice needs a strong loyal nature to bear her through life." The magnetism of Amy's gaze caused Vivian to

look up. He saw, in the sunshine high up, the child's dark Italian face beneath her fair English one: the little thing clinging to the well-poised form, looked down in safe confidence. Sunbeams made a glory in Amy's light brown hair; her smile was pensive, even sad. A moment before it had been in his mind to ask her not to carry the heavy child; now he thought she might carry a world. Presently they halted on a little terrace, under the shelter of a rock, and looked down soft declivities clothed with verdure and blossom, far down, to the deep, indescribable blue of the quiet sea. Neph chased lizards, Angela butterflies; the others sat in silence, hearing humming bees, distant tinkling cow bells, confused murmur from roads and gardens; under all, like the sweet burden of a melody, the soft croon of the sea. Swallows flitted out twittering from a warm rocky shelter beneath. Voices of singing girls rose from orange gardens below, where they were piling baskets with Hesperian fruit.

"It is like the gardens of Armida," Amy said.

"Who was Armida?" asked Lettice, with her innocent candour.

"A woman of genius, who made people fall in love with her. She was very beautiful and unscrupulous."

"She was not a woman at all," Lester added, "but a fiend."

"And then he knew it was fiend."

That miserable knight,"

quoted Amy and Lester, simultaneously.

Among the numerous perfections of the Immaculate were a velvety voice and a pleasant way of reading poetry. Therefore when Lettice, attracted by a wretched knight and a lovely fiendish lady, wished to know their history, he was kind enough to repeat, most musically and impressively—

"All thoughts, all passions, all delights,

Whatever stirs this mortal frame,

Are all but ministers of love,

And feed his sacred flame;"

till Angela, caught by the rhythm and the

words "love," "dream," "happy," left her play and leant against Amy's arm to listen.

"And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve."

repeated Lester almost tremblingly, when he found he was thinking of Lettice, while he gazed straight out to sea.

"She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace;
For well she knew I could not choose
But gaze upon her face."

Who could help seeing Lettice in that?

"And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous bride."

the Immaculate ended, with a quiver in his voice.

"Thank you; a pretty tale, but she was very easily won," Lettice remarked. The others were silent. Lester carried Angela down the mountain. During the descent, which was not hurried, one of the old discussions arose between him and Amy on such airy trifles as Fate, subjective poetry, drama, enchantments, the use of opium. Lettice listened "with a flitting blush, with down-cast eyes and modest grace," contributing little to the serious and solid conversation beyond a smile or an assent.

When at bedtime according to custom, Amy went to the room she shared with Louisa Stanley, to be able to attend on her suffering friend at night, she arranged the knotted olive roots burning on the open hearth, and brushed out the shining coils of Louisa's hair, her nightly task. But though this was the moment for confidences, she brushed in silence to-night.

"What is the matter!" asked Louisa, enjoying the dancing fire-light and the mesmeric influence of the brush, with the dreamy languor of consumption.

"Nothing," replied Amy, finishing her labour of love and twisting the long fair hair into a massive coil, "at least, I was thinking of cutting your hair short, this heavy growth weakens you."

"Spare my hair; my one vanity."

"Oh! Louie!" cried Amy, throwing herself

on her knees before the glowing wood fire, and burying her face in her lap.

"Well, child?"

"He is in love with her."

"Who is in love with whom?"

"Vivian Lester with Lettice Marshall."

"What of that? Will the world come to an end?"

"You know what she is, Louie, a shallow, selfish girl, and he——"

Well! he is all very well, but not exactly a demi-god. I always liked your Bayard, Amy, though he is so fatally perfect. Let us hope that he will strengthen Lettice's character."

"She will drag him down."

"Then he must be made of poor stuff. My dear child, go to sleep, dream that you are a physician to the Queen, and leave the Immaculate to fall in love and out again, as best he may."

"My pretty Amy!" Louisa thought as she tossed on her restless couch and listened to the sleeper's even breathing; "her affections are as untroubled as her health. But I wish this Perfection would go back to England and leave us in peace."

Amy was dreaming of the ruined tower in the ballad, the low sweet music and the love-stricken knight, who of course wore the features of the blameless Lester. Presently the sleeper's smile faded as the dream darkened; the singing of birds arose in the enchanted gardens of Armida, and two Crusaders, with faces like Amy and Angela, sprang from the bushes with drawn swords to free the spell-bound knight from his enchantment.

CHAPTER V.

"Tell me where is Fancy bred,
Or in the heart, or in the head,
How begot, how nourished?
It is engendered in the eyes,
With gazing fed: and Fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies."

February came, bringing a warmer and longer day, white heath blossom, white lilies,

hyacinths, anemones and primroses, and glowing masses of tulips in the gardens. The sparsely blooming flowers of winter, geraniums, salvias, carnations, now blossomed more freely, the scent of wall-flowers and stocks was in the air, camellias became daily more splendid; violets were a weed, mimosa a golden cloud. Those pure white camellias are often put to a melancholy use at this season, when invalids die off quickly. With February another Parliamentary session in England opened. Members came thronging back to Westminster, from fox-hunting and shooting; from Egypt, Algiers, Mentone and Rome, but the member for Dalesby was not among them. No very exciting events were forward; England was not even waging a little war, although a few skirmishes had taken place on the borders of British India; there were few Irish grievances; Scotland was lapped in momentary content; Conservatives were in office; the country was not over-run with discharged labourers and half-pay officers; no one for the moment was particularly anxious to disestablish the Church, to abolish the Crown, the Constitution, or the rights of property. Neither Slave Trade nor Factory Acts, Female Suffrage, or Artisans' Dwellings, disturbed the Parliamentary mind, and the gardens of Armida were fair; therefore the Immaculate decided that his country might be trusted to dispense for awhile with his presence.

An enchanter's wand had been waved over the prose of life, turning it to pure poetry. Vivian Lester seemed to have forgotten that he had only come to the Riviera to place Angela there and that a multitude of duties and interests called him back to England. At night he liked to go in the fishing-boats, hauling tarred ropes and handling fish, nets and bait with the fishers, and coming home in the small hours, or even at dawn, drenched and weary, invigorated and delighted. It was beautiful to flit over the dark waves beneath the silence of the starry sky and watch the boat's light tremble on the water; to see Col Aprico and the fishing

village on the shore below, the distant coast towns and villages sparkle out among orange groves, aloes and caroubes, casting flickering lights on the dark sea; to feel the keen night-breeze with now and then a scud of rain, a squall of wind, even a storm, to share the anxiety and excitement of the fishermen, to whom weather meant bread, even life. Their *patois* of mixed French and Italian was soon understood; they sang songs to plaintive, monotonous tunes; they were fascinated by the Immaculate's genial courtesy and adaptability, and soon discovered his genuine kindness of heart. Whole pages of Homer and Byron floated through his mind while he bore a part in whatever was forward on board. Sometimes the song of the Sirens would rise from the sweet sea silence; again Ulysses and his men sped westwards on the last endless voyage over wine-dark sea. Or Ulysses looked out, homesick, upon the blue waters, from the chamber in which the beautiful nymph sat by her perfumed hearth and span, while actual, present seamen plunged their lances into the fish by the light of fire-buckets at the prows. Or there was the morning plunge in keen cold sea, the swim, the return to little Angela at breakfast; the rosy child clinging to him, caressing him, giving him a home. On sunny days he took her with her nurse for a sail, Amy and Lettice and Frau von Stein often being of the party. Sometimes the Immaculate passed long sunny hours with the invalids on the verandah or in the garden. On those occasions he was often struck with the sad change in Grace Langton, to whom five years ago he had lost half a heart, so near was this gentle, sweet-faced girl to his ideal. But Sister Avis! faded, haggard, pinched in face and figure, with constant headaches, mysterious sufferings, and no interest in life! She was an object for pity, indeed, profound pity, but love. -No.

"What has changed your sister?" he asked Amy one day, understanding she had no disease. "If I am not mistaken, she has no true vocation for the religious life."

"Neither has she. She needed occupation, she couldn't stand the emptiness of our frivolous, aimless girl-life. Slumming and church embroidery was not enough. So she drifted into this Sisterhood. The severity, monotony and tyranny are killing her. That is all." Her eyes haunted Lester, who was not deficient in feeling; hungry restless eyes they were, the prison cells of a struggling soul. But Louisa Stanley was an even more piteous spectacle in her frailty and feverish energy, with her short dry cough, brilliant colour, transparent hands, and the remains of such singular beauty. What an irony, he thought, on this new notion of learned and professional women.

"Ah!" said Amy with emotion, "it is not study. I knew Miss Stanley as an over-worked, worried governess, thinking the long hours and perpetual strain of school teaching paradise in comparison with the life of a private governess. It is the repression of every faculty but that of monotonous endurance, that kills. The repose of wholesome study came too late." The Immaculate was deeply grieved; he felt that all these girls ought to have been married and thus saved. But he could not, under existing social arrangements, marry them all, else would he cheerfully have done his duty as a gallant knight.

Grand discussions took place on the verandah, complicated often by the confusion of tongues prevailing at Villa Dole' Acqua. During these serious debates, Lettice looked on and down from a supercilious height, occasionally smiling in response to some appeal, or appearing to listen in gracious silence. Not that she actually listened to "dry stuff" about politics, literature, art, science, morals, human nature; but she looked as if she listened and looked charming, while she mused upon her bonnets and frocks, or thought of various little relationships, jealousies and antipathies at Villa Dole' Acqua, or in the English colony, of the depth of a certain consumptive clergyman's devo-

tion to Amy, of the extent to which the blameless knight had resigned his affections to her own keeping. This topic was the most interesting; she really liked Lester; his homage was more acceptable than that of other men; she appreciated his gracious presence and fine courtesy. The Immaculate was enchanted with the sweet, womanly humility with which she listened, thus offering a quiet, unobtrusive sympathy in her silent presence. This still receptivity was the crown of Lettice's charms.

Frau von Stein's weekly receptions were small and early, being arranged with reference to the convenience of her invalid "children," der ritterliche Lestare was almost always among the guests. Col Aprico society was necessarily limited in quantity and chiefly invalid in quality; the von Stein receptions occurred after sunset, thus excluding chest patients. Conversation was polyglot, but largely English—of a kind. The ubiquitous Amurkan girl, marvellously dressed and absolutely at her ease, was not wanting at the evening receptions. The Immaculate's sensitive feelings were often wounded by these damsels; one of them called on him at the "Montone d'oro" to take him for a drive in her waggon.

"There's just room for you and me," she called out in piercing nasal treble, "and I guess we'll have a real good time together, anyhow."

Poor dear Saint Vivian's face was a study; he almost swooned under this overwhelming distinction. He "coveted the honour," he was "sensible of the kindness," it "was really too good of" Miss Williss, he "could not take advantage," until Miss Ada D. Williss came to the conclusion that "the Britisher was just real queer, and she had no use for him anyway."

But "our good Herr Lestare's" exquisitely poised feelings were often pained and shocked even by the proceedings in Frau von Stein's *salon*. He insisted on opening doors and handing chairs for ladies, and greatly embarrassed fair-haired Fräulein Anna, Frau

von Stein's niece, by wanting to hand coffee and cakes, a prerogative she reserved to herself, according to custom. Resigning himself sorrowfully to these depraved habits, he learnt at last to look on, tolerant, but martyred, and more beautiful than ever. One evening in early March, the young German, von Wilden, was at the piano, making it rage and roar like an angry Titan, wail and lament like a lost angel, whisper soft ecstasies, breathe exquisite longings, peal in jubilant exultation. Then he showered discords upon the keys, as if a demoniac battle were raging within; again a troop of fairies seemed to be tripping to delicate measures in the moonlight; it is impossible to say what this young Teuton did not do with the instrument. A steely flame was in his blue eyes, his flaxen moustache and long hair bristled; his compatriots wept; Lester was so enthralled that he did not observe the departure of Lettice from the room. Presently the music died into rippling sweetness, like hidden brooks; it was so low and soft that the crackling of olive roots on the hearth was heard,—then, like a nymph from the water, arose a melodious Volkslied, simple and artless as a wild bird's song, yet vibrant with elementary feelings.

Von Wilden kept his eye upon a curtain which was drawn across the doorway of the double drawing-room, and modulated the concluding strains into the slow mysterious notes of the immortal "Lorelei," with its burden of unutterable yearning, and deep, yet pleasing, melancholy. It was taken up in four parts by hidden voices, the curtain was raised, the lamps lowered. In the brilliant light thrown into the back room, oleanders, palms and myrtles in tubs made a miniature forest, beyond which was the sheen of water (mirrors on the ground, their frames hidden with ivy), out of which, shadowed by more verdure at its base, rose a rock, the summit steeped in yellow light. Above all, in the blaze on the crest of the rock, reclined the fatal, fairy Lorelei, combing her golden hair with her golden comb and singing her mystical

song. Her slender white throat and round white arms glittered with jewels; a golden belt, studded with gems, bound her shining white garment. The gold tresses, delicate features and fairy-like form were those of Lettice.

All who could sing joined as if under a spell in, "*Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten,*" Englished thus by the Immaculate—

I know not why I am holden
By this, mysterious woe,
A legend centuries olden
From memory will not go.
The air is cool, it is darkling,
The Rhine waves peacefully flow,
The tops of the mountain, are sparkling
In evening's tranquil glow.
Above is a maiden reclining,
So sweet, so fairly fair;
The light in her jewels is shining,
She combs her golden hair.
Her comb is of gold, and serious
And tranquil, singeth she
A song with a deep, mysterious
And mighty melody.
The fisher, his little bark sailing,
It seizes with wildest woe;
He sees not the rocks, but, paling,
Looks up at the golden glow.

Lester scarcely breathed, as he looked up at the beautiful vision, spell-bound, his features wan and strange in the dim light.

At last in the wild waves swinging,
The fisher and boat are spun;
And that with her magic singing,
The Lorelei has done.

The curtains ran across: a storm of applause arose. "Wunderschon," "Wal, that *was* just elegant," "Ravissant," "Brava," "Well done!" Then Frau von Stein, who had wept from the first Lorelei note, drying her eyes, rose and bid the Swiss girl "Good-night," the guests took leave, melted imperceptibly away, and Lester went out into the cool starry night singing softly like one in glamour.

Her comb is of gold, and serious
And sweetly singeth she,
A song with a deep, mysterious
And mighty melody.

Alas, poor blameless knight! he lingered long beneath the lemon-flowers, watching the

lights fade from the villa. Then he went to the shore, unmoored a boat, and rowed out to sea. A crescent moon poured a flood of liquid silver on the dark sea plains. Col Aprico, with lessening light-sparkles, lay nestled in the gorge; hoary olives, shining myrtles, caroubs and orange trees stood magically still in the moonbeams. As the boat shot tranquilly on, terraces widened, masses of olive and fir gloomed darkly, rocks gleamed whitely, in silver rain of light. Snow had fallen recently, the higher mountains were tipped with sparkling white, waves washed softly, oars dipped with a musical plash; all was poetry and enchantment. He rowed on and on, over paths of silver, over fields of gloom, beneath wan stars, the magic song in his ears, the Lorelei spell upon him, on and on in silence and night and solitude. Deeper than the lowest depths of the Mediterranean, deeper than unplumbed wastes of deepest ocean, this poor youth thought himself in love.

CHAPTER VI.

Celia "Come, come, wrestle with your affections."
Rosalind "Oh, they take the part of a better wrestler than myself."

In the moonlit garden of Villa Dole' Acqua, breathing flower-scented air and gazing wistfully on the silvered sea, where the solitary boat was a dark speck on the moon's bright path, Amy Langton stood long, thinking of Lester's face, wan and strained under the Lorelei spell.

"Moon-struck, Amy?" asked Louisa from her bed, as she entered the room they shared, when at last she went in.

"Completely lunatic," she replied, "and wicked enough to leave you to brush your own hair."

"I am quite strong now. I shall be able to go to work again in the summer."

"Ah! dearest physician, heal thyself first."

"You shall do that."

"Don't talk. Go to sleep, Louie."

"Amy," said Louisa, starting up suddenly, "if I fail, if I die; remember, it was not the profession."

"Hush! who talks of dying?"

"If I become a confirmed invalid, don't let them say——"

Amy was silent, knowing that her friend would never be well enough to do anything.

"You know it was not the profession," continued Louisa with flushed cheeks. "Remember those years of exhausting drudgery and teaching; how I robbed myself of sleep to get the mental food I was denied by day. And then that early unhappiness! Nothing saps health like that." Amy too well remembered a story of treachery and wrecked happiness and affection, heard once in the twilight.

"Sleep, dearest, sleep," she said. "Dream that you are principal of a medical college."

Louisa was nine-and-twenty; she looked scarcely nineteen; in her quiet slumber that soon fell upon her she had an infantine look, the occasional effect of the disease that was consuming her. How much had Louisa's "story" had to do with her sickness? Was the unnatural gloom of the cloister or the pining for a lost dream the cause of Sister Avis' weariness of body and spirit? Surely Grace might have been healthy and happy by this time, had she lived a wholesome life. Louisa had so long learnt to rate the man who had broken faith with her at his real worthlessness, that a less laborious, a less wearisome struggle against the world might have spared her fatal disease.

Waking in the early morning and looking at the marvels of light upon the dawn-touched sea, Amy's first thought was of the Lorelei spell. She had aimed at living on such a high level, in such a pure, passionless calm of soul, had so loved old tales of lofty maiden lives, of Athenes, Diamas and Teuton prophetesses. Such lives she had thought herself strong enough to follow. And now? She was hurled from this lofty eminence. Why, why, did the Lorelei spell make her so sad and sick at heart? Why?

She took the geological hammer, likened by the Immaculate to that of Thor in happy times gone by, the botanical tin, a long roll of bread and a piece of cheese, and went out into the beauty of the dawn. The sea was a vast heaving splendour of millions of jewels and sheets of molten gold, transfusing themselves silently one into the other. The breath of morning was gentle but invigorating. Peasant boys with donkeys, basket-laden girls tripping up mountain paths, boatmen out in the bay, sang as they went their several ways. Flower fragrance rose like incense from censers of golden light, every step crushed violets and blossomed thyme in the path, the song of birds, blended with low sea murmurs, and the sighing of pine tops was a chant of joy before the Eastern splendour of sea and sky. She flitted rapidly and easily in that buoyant air, up the steep sunny eminence that gives name and shelter to Col Aprico, till she reached an olive grove above it, and rested. A larger expanse of sea and sky was now visible in increasing splendour, the transfusing of jewels and blazing gold was deeper, the great sea spread its storied waters in burnished glory before the sight, her heart thrilled to think of all those waters had seen in ages gone by. That glowing flood touched almost every shore venerable in story and song, the cradles of learning and art, of law and religion; the farthest wave was even now kissing the soil of Palestine. Exhilarating thoughts, exhilarating air, exquisite world of beauty and peace!

Farther on she presently came upon a girl milking goats, and asked for a draught of milk. In a few minutes the milking girl's history was told, the story of her father and mother, her brothers and sisters, their goats and olive yard, her betrothal, the little tragedies preceding it, her approaching marriage and the small house that she was to live in. The milking-girl was very happy, she said—milkmaids always are; at least in poems and plays. Why can we not all be milkmaids?—She had refused Pietro only

five times, of course meaning to have him if he asked long enough. Pietro was a good lad, and "bel garçon." Happy, happy milking girl!

Amy gave her something to buy a wedding present with, and went her way, picturing the girl's homely life with envy, as she walked on. All in it was so calm and restful; nothing stirred it but the season's changes, hopes and fears of the olive harvest and wandering goats, excitements of lemon picking, of pruning and planting fruit trees and tilling patches of maize. At the end of the day she had walked far and rested long, but the hammer had been idle, the flower tin was empty.

One subtle movement of soul had taken all the taste and spirit out of her own life: yesterday it was the rose blooming on the stem, to-day the rose cut and withered in the sun.

"Were it not done as others use,

To sport with Amaryllis in the shade?"

But something nobler replied, "No; life has better things than happiness."

Everything suddenly seemed more difficult, less worth the doing; life had become arid, barren of interest; the past was dreary to remember, the future weary to anticipate. For there could never be any joy, nothing to anticipate but work and struggle; a grey sunless life. What struggles Louisa and she had made to gain their professional knowledge. Amy had spent vacations in teaching children, supplementing nursing staffs, and writing for magazines. How they had been pushed about from examining body to examining body, found perfect and then denied diplomas! What antagonism they had encountered in private and public! Themselves had figured in public prints as "Unwomanly women." Personal rudeness and unmanly sneers they had received, but not the actual physical violence some older friends had suffered at the hands of chivalrous men students at a great historic city in the north. These ladies, it seemed, had to be hustled and knocked about and forcibly

expelled from lectures, lest the knowledge of the laws that govern, and the harmony that pervades, organic life should blunt their finer feelings. Vexed by a thousand arbitrary obstacles to study, while their brothers' studies were cradled and fostered in silk and velvet, they had still surmounted them; but would she—for Louisa's race was run—have courage to face those offered to the practice of that hardly won profession; arbitrary obstacles and barriers made lest the finer feebleness of female minds should be strained by over-much labour. They had conquered so far. Are women then made of more heroic stuff than men?

Such thoughts revolved all day in her brain, gradually and insensibly soothed by the beauty and calm of the hills. A solemn still voice spoke peace from the deep heart of mighty nature, the undying friend of man. "I am great," said that calm voice, "but there is a greater. Have no fear, be true, unselfish, noble. Live up to the fuller light dawning within. Let happiness take care for itself. Trim and feed the clear light burning within."

Thus exalted in spirit, she came down the mountain path, into the purple glory of evening, that burnt in her wind-blown hair, and transfigured her face. The first star swung tremulous in the pale green West; Villa Dole' Acqua was still far away, when something black bounded up the steep path in the purple gloom with a joyous whine, heralding his master.

"Ah! my Bayard! why, why did I not listen to you, long ago? Why was I blind and deaf and stupid? Nobody and nothing is like you in the whole world," she thought. Let them call him a prig—perhaps she was another—he might be impossibly immaculate, too fond of regenerating mankind by his own unaided wisdom, too much inclined to preach and prose; still he was in truth a very perfect gentle knight; he was made of sterling stuff, and he was young, and she was young, and—he was bewitched by the Lorelei's song.

"Why, what is the matter?" asked the Immaculate, springing up the path, in the gathering dusk in his proper person. "And where *have* you been the whole day long?"

"I've been geologising and botanising, as you see. There is nothing the matter."

"But, dear prophetess, you are pale. You are not looking happy."

"Who is happy?" returned the Sibyl; "Life is not always easy."

"But it should be. Come, dear prophetess, can't I help you? Nothing I can do? I don't like to see you pale and sad."

"Not sad; a little tired. I've been thinking."

"Ah! Dr. Amy, your good angel, believe me, has spoken to you—indeed it has struck me of late that something was stirring within you. You have been different, at one time I thought you were vexed with me—but I see now, you are perceiving the mistake of your life. It is not too late to change."

"Much too late."

"No, not too late. A character with such fine elements as yours. Try a happier life; natural and feminine like——"

"Like Lettice's?"

"Exactly. That is a life that soothes and elevates one to contemplate."

"It does not soothe or elevate me in the least. No, Mr. Lester, your eloquence is wasted. My good angel has indeed spoken and counselled me—to go on. But I must go home. I am tired."

"At least take my arm."

"Thank you, no. I am best alone when tired. I am always best alone."

"Take warning from your friend's fate. The life has killed her."

"Not this life," Amy said, "something far more wearing."

"Dear Miss Amy, are you a real woman or a goddess?"

"Oh, a goddess," she replied. "Can you doubt it?"

"I believe it. I always thought it; I am awed by you. You are a higher, an unearthly being, superior to human weakness

But, dear goddess, I have not yet told you." The Immaculate came to a full stop; perhaps he blushed.

"Nothing wrong with Angela, I hope?"

"No, and yet—I have to leave Angela—I am going back to England."

"Poor neglected England! It's about time. Who knows but the empire may already be beyond even your succour?"

"You are severe. I shall be gone about ten days. Will you take the child in my absence?" asked the Immaculate, whose virtues were almost redeemed by his good temper.

"Certainly, if you can trust her."

"As for trusting! This is real friendship, Amy. In gratitude for which I shall make further demands——"

"I am tired," she said petulantly, turning towards a bench under an olive, where she rested. "The moon is rising. I hope that no bad news calls you to England," she added, looking down at the dark sea.

"No, not bad news."

"Then you want no sympathy," she replied with concentrated essence of gall.

"Ah, but I do. It takes two to be happy," was the profound rejoinder. "Do you remember our old talks, of the ideal I hoped to realise?"

"Perfectly. You were to inform me when the catastrophe occurred."

"It has occurred."

"Quite unnecessary to tell me."

"Why?"

"Because my eyesight is good."

"Ah! Do you think others have seen? Has *she* seen?"

"Others have not seen. And Lettice—what she thinks I do not mean to tell. If you can't make love at first hand, you can go without a wife."

"Oh! thank you; thank you so much. But I must wait ten days before I may venture to take decisive steps to make sure."

"Don't you think her worth waiting for?"

"Ah! Amy, you have never been in love."

"How do *you* know? Somebody waited twice seven years once."

"I would wait thrice—for her."

She thought it would be a good plan.

"I have known her only a few weeks; she is away from her parents."

"I am her guardian for the time."

"Dear prophetess, you look like a guardian, but not an earthly one. It is so slight an acquaintance; she is so young, so inexperienced. She is so—how dare *I* think of winning *her*? Every mean thing has vanished from existence; there is a new splendour on the sea, in the stars. Life is no longer a disease, but a rapture."

"You ought to say all this to her, not to me," she returned drily.

True. The Immaculate was silenced, but he had almost said what he secretly thought, that Lettice would never understand these transcendental emotions. Pale light filtered through the olive boughs on his beautiful, spiritual face. Amy, with her head resting against the rugged gray olive trunk, her face in the shadow, wondered and wondered. "Poor Rinaldo," she thought; "Poor helpless, spell-bound knight! When will he wake and be in his right mind?" The moon's path widened on the gleaming wave, white stars looked softly from an azure sky; some boats cuttle-fishing with lances, and with pots of fire at their prows, moved in the shallow waters close in shore, their red lustre falling weirdly over the sea and reflected upon the dusky figures standing with ready poised lances in the boats. Points of ruddy gold along the coast were towns and hamlets, massed myrtles, orange and lemon leaves threw back the moonshine like flakes of silver. He looked on this beautiful night scene thoughtfully for a little, she on him; then he turned to her with a smile, "You will at least wish me God speed?"

"With all my heart."

"Thank you. But how shall I ever win her—one so far far above me?"

"She is fortunate in winning such unselfish devotion," Amy returned with hardly

veiled impatience. This prostration before such a worthless idol degraded him. To see him twine garlands on the ass's head was too painful.

"I want you to approve my choice. Tell me that she is not only the most beautiful, but the best, of her sex."

"My good friend, I am not in love with Lettice," she said gently.

"Nor with me, yet you seem to set me highest."

Amy passed her hand over her face. "Don't women always run each other down?" she asked acidly.

"Dearest goddess, you should be more than woman."

"Perhaps I am less."

They sat long in the solemn shadows of hoary olives, he speaking, she mostly listening. He told of his plans; arranged to prevail upon Frau von Stein to take Angela. "Why not the whole menagerie?" Amy said.

There was a strange peace in thus sitting and conversing for the last time, she thought. What a child her knight was, after all; a child sitting at his mother's knee in the firelight, pouring out his small hopes and aspirations; like a child, unconsciously selfish; like a child, pitied and borne tenderly with by his confidante. Flower scents rising on the chill sea breath, soft rustle of winds in olive, aloe and oleander boughs, mellow lustre of the ascending moon on magic sea and fairy shore, grey olive boles, torn and twisted as if by storm, and looking, in the faint filtered lights, like aged pillars in a Saxon church, sounds of each other's voices, low boom of the gentle sea; all were impressive, never forgotten. But what was this? When they rose from the olive shadows and began the descent, Amy found the world turning wildly, her limbs gave way, she swayed, the Immaculate caught her a dead weight in his arms. Had she done this a few days earlier, well! the course of the Immaculate's true love might have been different. As it was, he was frightened to death. Still it was among his perfections always to do the

right thing at the right moment. Therefore there was of course a flask of brandy ready in his pocket, which he applied with the utmost elegance and dexterity to her lips with one hand, while supporting her head on his shoulder with the other arm, kneeling gracefully meanwhile on one knee. It was a most affecting spectacle.

Miss Amy Langton weighed about ten stone; no wonder Mr. Lester trembled beneath his lovely burden. But would he have quivered and turned so pale under ten stone of oats or potatoes? Possibly not. All night in dreams he was toiling through endless distances, Amy always stayed upon him, and always slipping through his arms down infinite descents.

When Amy woke next morning, she found the natural, but prosaic, result of a long day's wandering and romantic evening conversation in the olive shades, was a severe and unbecoming cold in the head, of all mortal ills the most hopelessly prosaic, the least relieved by romance. If no philosopher ever endured toothache patiently, who can endure a downright, deafening, blinding, stifling catarrh with resignation? Especially who that is feminine and fair? But Miss Amy Langton supported her affliction with philosophy; she bore the reproaches and caresses of Frau von Stein and her strange, unhallowed potions with angelic patience. A gentle strife raged between Louisa and the good Frau on the treatment proper for the patient, the latter acting upon the principle of hitting a man when down, prescribing starvation and lowering medicines, a principle which is one more testimony to the invincible toughness of German constitutions; the former held to the principle of picking up the fallen. This strife the patient calmed by accepting the Frau's medicines and Louisa's glasses of wine and strong soups impartially.

Early next morning the Immaculate called to take leave and hear what was to be done with Angela. The announcement that Lester was leaving the Riviera for England stirred

a universal desire to take advantage of his journey. The English had letters for him to post in London, to these they added half-a-dozen parcels. The foreigners to a woman, required needles of English manufacture in various sizes, which, perhaps, Meester Lestare would "make come" for them. The young German gentleman wanted English books and stationery. Frau von Stein was in need of a few dozen yards of English calico, so were two or three other ladies. Fraulein Anna mentioned with some blushing that she should like some long stockings of English machine make; almost everybody wanted Sheffield cutlery. The young Frenchman alone needed nothing from England, but if M. de Lestare should be at Paris, would he have the extreme complaisance to procure for him half-a-dozen indispensable articles from the only civilised spot on the globe.

Monsieur de Lestare with the utmost charm and complaisance undertook all these commissions, taking the precaution to record them in his note-book.

"Tell me *Liebechen*," added the good Frau, knitting her brows in thought, as she addressed Amy, who was sitting in the sun, a semi-animated mass of shawls, heaped upon her by the kindness of her friends, "Is there something more I might make bring cheaply out of London?"

"You were wanting a four-post bedstead the other day, *meine Beste*."

"Zat could incommode him," replied the Frau, "such English bedsteads are heavy."

Lester turned to Lettice, who was reclining gracefully, sunlight and shadow enhancing her beauty, a white camellia in her hand.

"And you?" he asked, "what may I do for you? I shall ask permission to call upon Mrs. Marshall one day."

"No; will you really?" returned Lettice with brilliant eyes and a joyous surprise, "then you will take my love to them, and say how well I am looking—that is, if you think so." He certainly thought it. "But I shall certainly fall ill if I go home yet," she added

with charming archness. "Be sure you say that, Mr. Lester."

"Every word of it. I shall be seeing your nieces, Miss Langton's nieces—one is my god-daughter."

"Oh, yes. Ceecil and Carrie are staying with mother. Only my love."

"They want somebody's love," Grace said. "They get very little from their parents."

"They are angry with them for not being boys," added Lettice. "How very natural!"

The Immaculate's sensitive face quivered as if a false note had jarred.

Frau von Stein consented to receive Angela and her nurse, to the satisfaction of the majority of her guests. It was a serious matter to break the tidings to the child, and the parting was not accomplished without some diplomacy. Angela received an invitation to dine and sleep at Villa Dolc' Acqua, which she gladly accepted, her joy dashed by the announcement that Vivian was not coming home that night. Weeping ensued, whence her mind was diverted by fairy tales and promised pictures and toys at Villa Dolc' Acqua.

"Does that woman live there?" she asked suddenly, lifting her head from her adopted father's arm.

"Which woman?"

"The cross one with yellow hair, Letty."

"It is naughty to call people cross, Angela. I hope you have not been naughty to that lady."

"I shall not go if she lives there," the child returned tranquilly.

"Will you not go to Sister Avis and Frau von Stein and Miss Amy?" he asked, setting her on the ground impatiently, upon which she began to cry. His heart smote him when he looked at the small figure standing before him, its chest heaving, its little fists screwed into its eyes.

"Don't cry, Carina. Look, I am going to bring you a beautiful doll when I come back. She needs a mother, poor mite," he thought, soothing and caressing her till she smiled again.

But Angela, though pacified, was firm in her resolution not to go to the "cross woman," and only the appearance of Frau von Stein and Amy on the hotel steps cut the knot of the difficulty.

"I promise you, my little angel, you shall have nothing to do with Lettice; that young lady would go to the end of the world to leave you behind," Frau von Stein said in broken Italian. "You need not fear, Herr Lester," she added in German, "the little one will always be happy with Miss Amy. You can therefore buy my calico with a light heart, and think of your little one in a child's paradise. Farewell, my good Herr Lester. A happy journey. *Auf Wiedersehen!*"

Angela declined to go without her father; he therefore accompanied them to the gate, when Amy turned, with the child clinging to her dress, and bid him vanish suddenly without good-bye before Angela perceived him. "Take this," she added, giving him a piece of white heather, "for good luck."

To be continued.

DANISH MEMORIES.

BY LADY JEPHSON.

CHAPTER I.

THERE are endless ways of reaching Denmark, but I know of none better than the short voyage from Kiel to Korsør. The super-session of sea-sickness, alas! is too great a boon to be looked for in this world, but there are ways and means of evading it. Conspicuous among the choicest is that of electing to voyage on a fine day. We, being wise in our generation, waited patiently at Kiel until a bright September morning augured well for the

enterprise. Then we bade good-bye to the grimy wharves of the German Dockyard, and after steaming for six hours in the Baltic, sighted the red roofs and windmills of Korsør.

Let it not be imagined that this was our first glimpse of land. About two hours after leaving Kiel we came in sight of the island of Langeland. Rich pasture lands, orchards, well-cultivated fields, cosy farm-houses, hayricks, beech-woods, old-fashioned manor houses, and picturesque villages, in turn delighted us. The greater part of the island belongs to Count Ahlefeldt, and his estate, Tranekjaer, is the show-place of Langeland. Anything more ideally peaceful, prosperous, and bucolic it would be hard to imagine. Denmark is indeed, above all others, the country of pastoral charm. It lays no claim to grandeur of scenery, yet few landscapes can be more seductive, enchanting, or picturesque.

I can never forget my first impressions of Korsør. Above the town lay a rosy bank of cloud, pink and golden by turns, as it reflected the rays of the setting sun. Long and well-rounded it lay in the clear blue-green of the sky. "Terrestrial scenery," says Mrs. Meynell, "is much, but it is not all"; and although I may seem to diverge from a description of Korsør, who could paint a



AMALIENBORG PLADS.



A STREET BIT, COPENHAGEN.

picture without first putting in its sky? Cloudland conveys the impression of weather, if windy, stormy, sunshiny, or tranquilly a monotone of grey. As we first saw Denmark its limpid sky, its luminous clouds, expressed the clear dry climate which we found it to possess. Beneath the golden bank of cloud lay clustered the picturesque burnt-sienna and Indian-red roofs, the brown windmills, and the quaint spires of Korsør. Behind the houses rose masts and yard-arms bristling, as if from the middle of the town. Cloud, houses, and shipping were reflected in the glassy waters, and gained in softness of outline by the reflection. It seemed to us an enchanted country of luminous yellows, orange-reds, and warm browns. No colour negation, no cold greys, no neutral tints, marred the glory of that picture.

Korsør lies on a peninsular, which divides its bay from the sea. Facing the landing stage is a beautiful building in the Dutch Renaissance style, a type of architecture

much seen in Denmark. The happy blending of two opposite orders — the Italian Renaissance and Northern Gothic — is curiously beautiful in result, and the colour of the buildings, a warm red brick and yellowish stone, suits a country whose prevailing tone is green.

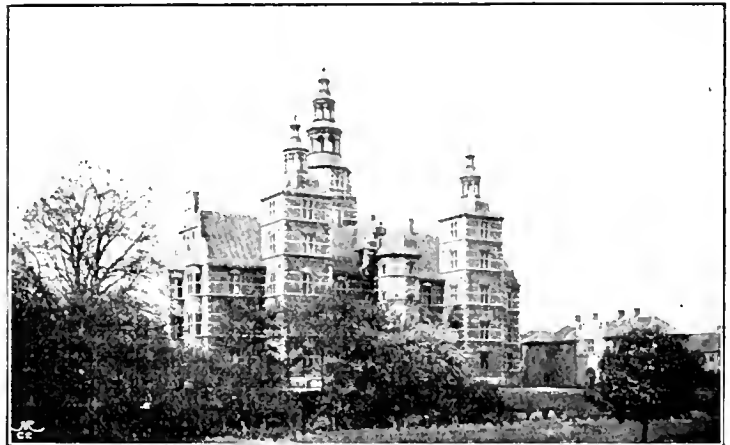
At Korsør we took train for Copenhagen, travelling leisurely across the Island of Zealand, and arriving at the Capital about nine. The predominant character of scenery in Zealand is much the same as that of Langeland. It bears the stamp of agricultural prosperity, and if no signs of enormous wealth are visible, so certainly is sordid penury undiscoverable. Well-wooded, well-watered, fertile, and well-cultivated, Zealand is a land of meadows, orchards, lakes, and farmhouses. Here and there windmills, villages, and manor-houses break the monotony of green, and wherever there is a country house of any pretension, so surely is its own, peculiar, private lake

not far off. The farmhouses are one-storied, whitewashed, thatched, and built round three sides of a square, giving thus an open courtyard to the road. As we neared Roeskilde the sun set in a blaze of blood-red and gold, and the effect of the dark woods and windmills outlined against the brilliant sky was wonderfully good. Never out of Italy have I seen such a sunset.

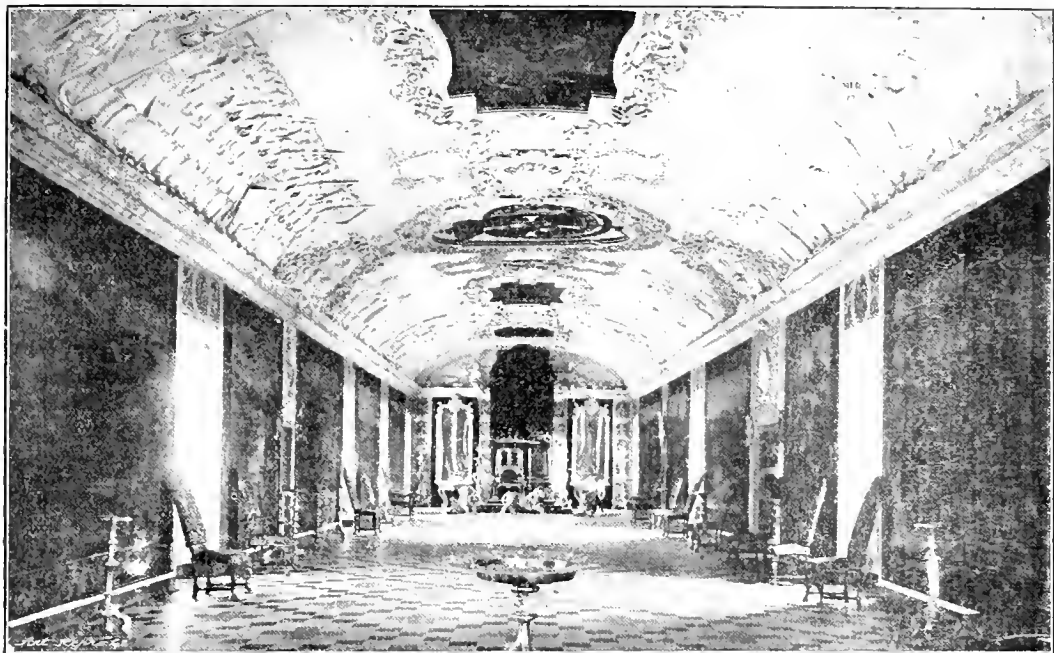
At Copenhagen we went in our ignorance to the "Kongen af Danmark," a well-situated hotel, where we had a charming *suite* of rooms, primitive sanitary arrangements, and indifferent cookery. The sanitary arrangements we discovered to be common to the whole of Copenhagen, since there is no organised system of drainage in the City, but we should have improved matters as regards *cuisine* had we gone to the "Angleterre."

The day after our arrival being Sunday, we made acquaintance with the beautiful little English Church which stands close to the harbour and citadel. Dedicated to St. Alban, this church was designed by Blomfield, and opened in 1887. The Prince and Princess of Wales interested themselves keenly in its building, and helped the good work generously. We found the congregation to be an astonishingly large one, indeed, it extended beyond the limits of the Church. Whether all came from pure motives of devotion may be questioned. As many Danes and Foreigners were among the gathering, it is open to surmise if the presence of the Princess of Wales had not proved as powerful a magnet as the service. Walking home we passed through the Amalienborg Plads, a charmingly pretty square, in its way quite one of the most perfect in Europe. Centuries ago a great

Royal Palace stood on this site, but it was burnt down in 1689. Four noble Danish families then built for their own enjoyment and occupation four beautiful miniature palaces across the corners of a square. These are connected by colonnades and wings belonging to the palaces: in short, except where the Plads is traversed by streets it is entirely surrounded by palaces. The architecture is French-Renaissance, the buildings are never more than three stories in height, and the roofs are steep-pitched, with dormer windows. Doric pillars and pilasters beautify the front of each palace, and stone statues and vases break the monotony of the balustrade, which runs along the top of the buildings. The Moltkes, and Brockdorffs, and Schaacks, like good and loyal subjects, turned out of these palaces when the King had need of them in 1794, when the huge Christiansborg Slot lay a smouldering heap. At the present moment, Christian the Ninth and his Court live in two of the palaces, the Crown Prince has the third, and the fourth is used as the Foreign Office. Looking from outside at the colonnade which connects the King's palaces, it seems beyond belief that there should be room enough in the architrave for a corridor. Yet at State Balls the guests pass by this means from the ball-



ROSENBERG CASTLE.



THE KNIGHT'S HALL, ROSENBERG.

room, which is in one palace, to the supper-room, which is in the other. One catches a delightful glimpse of water and ships between the palaces of the King and Crown Prince. In the middle of the square is the equestrian statue of Frederick V., the far from model husband of a beautiful and good Princess—Louise of England, daughter of George II. Noble in character as she was dignified and beautiful in person, generous in her charities, ever sympathetic to misery, Queen Louise earned the entire love and esteem of the Danish people. When she died, at the age of 27, the grief for her loss was intense. Frederick V. married a second time, Juliana Maria of Brunswick Wolfenbüttel, a handsome, but unamiable woman. It was Juliana who intrigued to bring about the ruin of poor Carolina Matilda, sister of George III., and wife of Christian VII., son of the good Louise. Frederick V. was the son of Christian VI. and the famous Maddalena.

After a reign of 20 years he died at the age of 43.

Our first impressions of Copenhagen were altogether delightful. Nothing could well be more picturesque than the canals filled with market boats and quantities of shipping. Nowhere could more exquisitely beautiful architecture be seen than that of the Bourse, with its many gables and original dragon spire. Here, in old Copenhagen, the churches and gabled houses are built of rich red brick, daintily touched to their infinite beautifying by a yellowish stone. The noble palaces of Rosenborg and Fredricksborg defy the finger of time to mar their symmetry. The market women argue, and barter, and jest, and drive brisk trade all unconscious of the subtle beauties about them. The harmony of clear, bright skies, golden clouds, and brilliantly-tinted buildings is lost to their unawakened minds. So also is the valuable contrast of cool-green in the trees and cold blue in the waters. Old Copen-

hagen is intensely and singularly charming; modern Copenhagen as significantly prosaic and lamentably commonplace. In what remains to us of the Copenhagen of Christian IV's time we see the influence of what Pater calls that "novel and seductive architecture, which by its engrafting of exotic grace on homely, native forms, spoke of a certain restless aspiration to be what one was not, but might become, the old Gaulish desire to be refined, to be mentally enfranchised by the sprightlier grace of Italy." Our drive to the Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek revealed no architectural aspirations in the mind of the nineteenth century Dane, higher than the multiplication of jerry-built houses to be the sorrow and scorn of all true lovers of art. The road to the Museum lies through streets inconceivably hideous and unpictorial. Buildings emphatically monotonous in their unvarying lines of windows and doors, several stories high, roofed with slate, and plastered with grey stucco line the way. There is no originality, no imagination shown in the design of any of these. The evangel of beauty, as preached by the red roofs and brick houses of old Copenhagen, has not penetrated the deaf ears of the modern Danish builder. Coming from the achievements of a past age, from the original gables, the unique spires and glorious palaces of a century wiser than ours in the builder's craft, the transition to the depth of commonplace, to be found in the Westerbrogade, is terrible indeed.

CHAPTER II.

Rosenborg Castle is a beautiful example of Northern Renaissance. It stands, with its many turrets and gables, its red and grey colouring, a worthy monument of an artistic age. About it lie prim old-world gardens, terraces, clipped hedges, sun-dials, and parterres glowing with colour. With modern Philistine Copenhagen lying outside its walls Rosenborg has nothing in common. Dusty roads, tramway tracks, and grey stucco houses form a world apart from the beautiful

reds and greens to be found enclosed by those brick walls. The glory of its gardens has been shorn by invading fortifications. The hand of the spoiler has fallen heavily upon the gateway, where the original beautiful red-brick gables (surmounted by stone figures and sculpture) look out on the world now from between commonplace and hideous wings. None the less, there is a tangible charm about Rosenborg, a perfection in its details which is seldom found. The Englishman hugs to his soul the popular belief that Inigo Jones was its architect. There seems much likelihood of this having been the case, since we know that Inigo, after studying in Italy on Palladian models, became first architect to Christian IV. In the King of Denmark's train Inigo Jones went to England in 1606. By far the most art-loving and distinguished of Danish kings, Christian IV. has left the stamp of his fine original mind upon his capital. Original he was, even in the manner of his birth, since he elected to make his entrance into the world on no softer a bed than grass, and with no less poetical a canopy above him than the blue heavens, as seen through the branches of a hawthorn tree. His portraits show him to have been handsome, intelligent, and possessed of that intangible quality—presence. His dark hair is invariably plaited on one side into a curious pig-tail, and the history of this coiffure is curious enough. "Christian," says Horace Marryat, "was affected by a sort of *plica polonica*, a long mat of hair like a horse's tail distended with blood, which could not be cut off. It grew larger as he grew older—marlok it was called in Danish—so he made the best of it, and tied it up coquettishly with red ribbon." Marryat goes on to say that his courtiers, although unable to "improvise a plica," copied their king's style of hair-dressing, so that at last marloks were supposed to be the fashion of the day. Christian's first wife was Anne of Brandenburg, his second a morganatic spouse, the beautiful Christina Munk, daughter of Ellen Marsviin and Ludwig Munk. Christian married his



THE MARKET PLACE, COPENHAGEN.

"heart's dear Kersten" when she was seventeen years old, and she bore him many children. In the end she proved unworthy, and he separated from her, but she out-lived him by several years, and died at Boller. The most celebrated of Kersten Munk's daughters was Eleanor Ulfeld, one of the most beautiful and gifted women of her day. She seems to have been a Danish Crichton, since she spoke French, German, Spanish, Italian, and Latin, played the harp, wrote poetry, modelled in wax and clay, and was an adept at needlework. But, alas! for poor Eleanor, whose gifts and graces brought about her un-doing. Fredrick III., half-brother to Eleanor, was unlucky enough to be the husband of a cross-grained, jealous, spiteful little Hanoverian, Sophia Amelia. Not being beautiful or accomplished herself, the Queen resented such graces in others, and particularly in the person of her sister-in-law. After Christian IV.'s death Eleanor began by degrees to lose all the privileges accorded to her as the daughter of a king. She was

at last brought to trial with her husband, and both she and Corfitz Ulfeld were imprisoned in Hammershuus. From this they managed to escape, and were re-captured just as they were leaving Denmark in a fishing boat. Then the husband and wife were separated, and Eleanor was imprisoned for twenty-three years in the Blue Tower at Copenhagen. There, in a cell lighted only from above, this unhappy woman lived year after year, until the death of her wicked sister-in-law set her free. Christian V., Eleanor's nephew, then ruled over the land, and he made tardy reparation for the cruelty of his mother by granting Eleanor an allowance. Corfitz died before his wife gained her liberty. To him Eleanor wrote:—

*Rebus in adversis, facile est contemnere mortem,
Fortius ille facit, qui miser esse potest.*

Christian IV. died at Rosenborg in a small room which we see paved with slabs of marble and panelled with oak. Now-a-days the Castle is no longer used as a Royal residence, but is turned into a museum of art,

illustrative of the Oldenburg dynasty. The period it covers is from 1449 to 1863, and full justice is done to the Renaissance, Rococo, and Barocco epochs.

If, outside, Rosenborg is a dream of loveliness, inside it proves a treasure-house for wonders. The ceilings are heavily moulded, and often have massive pendants. The floors are paved with black and white marble. Oak panelling and tapestry cover the walls in the earlier rooms, and there is a wealth of rare cabinets—Italian, Dutch, French and Danish. Of finely-wrought gold and silver vessels and ornaments there is no lack. Have we not the famous Horn of Oldenburg, supposed to be the work of Daniel Arctæus, a sculptor; the Elephant order of Fredrick II.; the order of the "Armed Hand," instituted by Christian IV. for his especial favourites; and the beautiful prayer-book of Anna Catharina, daughter of Christian IV.? Consider, therefore, how pathetic a thing, in sharp contrast to this luxury of life, was the work of Eleanor Ulfeld (a portrait of Christian V., embroidered in silks, during her captivity). Around it she had worked the legend: "Behold here a king of angelic mind, who governs his people and his country in virtue and piety." Alas! poor Eleanor! It is somewhat comforting to know that Christian V.'s wife (Charlotte Amelia of Hesse) was full of compassion for her unhappy aunt, and, in so far as she dared brave the anger of the Dowager Queen, did what she could to make her captivity less terrible. In the Rose Room, which was hung with fine Italian tapestry, was a portrait of Prince George of Denmark, who, by-the-bye, was Christian V.'s brother. He was, if the picture spoke true, a singularly handsome man, and Anne's portraits show her to have been a very pretty, interesting-looking woman. On the second floor is the Riddersaal, a magnificent vaulted room, with boldly-moulded ceiling and black and white marble pavement. The walls are hung with beautiful Danish tapestry, illustrating scenes of the war between Sweden and Denmark in the seventeenth century. At the end of this room are

the coronation chairs of the King and Queen, His Majesty's made of narwhale horn, elaborately adorned with small allegorical figures, and the Queen's of silver-gilt. At the foot of the throne are three large silver lions, known as "Great Belt," "Little Belt," and "Sound." They figure prominently in the great events of a Danish Sovereign's life, and go with him to the last scene of all at Roeskilde. Facing the throne, at the extreme end of the room, is the silver font (you can see it in the picture) in which our beloved Princess of Wales was christened. In the Tower Room we find a beautiful collection of Venetian glass, given by the Doge Mocenigo to Fredrick IV. when that king visited Venice in 1709. Such deep blood-reds and gorgeous blues I have never seen approached in modern times, and the dainty, exquisite shapes one loves are all here. The glass is well arranged on shelves, which project in places to hold particular bowls or goblets. I question if the red velvet with which the shelves are covered is not too dark to throw up properly the delicate beauty of Venetian glass.

This particular of the many Fredricks was no model husband, and getting tired of his depressing, glum Queen, Louisa of Mecklenburg, he marriedmorganatically, during his wife's lifetime, Anne Sophia Reventlow, daughter of his Grand Chancellor. Apart from domestic matters Fredrick IV. was an excellent king, and in the matter of finance distinguished himself by leaving at his death thirty barrels of gold in his treasury. He also added much to the store of artistic treasures by what he brought back from Italy. Thus the tapestry of the Rose-room, many beautiful cabinets, and goblets of Italian workmanship are of his time. The monarchs who stand out conspicuously at Rosenborg are Christian IV., Christian the V., and Fredrick IV. All three were liberal-minded and art-loving.

But I should weary my readers by a list of half the beautiful things to be seen and studied at Rosenborg. No description could

do justice to the many rare and interesting historical treasures.

We wound up our day by a ramble along the canal bank, which lies opposite Christiansborg Slot. The palace rears its ungainly enormous walls, charred with fire, a monstrosity ugly expanse of wall and window. The history of the Slot seems one of perpetual burning and building too tedious to tell. Sophia Madalena of Brandenburg, wife of that colourless king, Christian VI., built the most beautiful of the many palaces which rested on this site. Fire, as usual, swept it away. Lastly, the palace was rebuilt by Fredrick VI. in 1828, and again destroyed by fire in 1884. What remains of its architecture is enough to make us turn with relief to the exquisitely-beautiful Bourse hard by, with its nine perfect gables and marvellous spire. Whose, I wonder, was the inspiration that evolved the four dragons twisted together, with their tails tapering upwards, whilst their heads face the cardinal points. The artist's name no man can tell, but the spire is believed to have come from Calmar, in Sweden. The building, like most of Christian IV.'s time, is Dutch-Renaissance.

Much busy life goes on about the old Bourse. Over the bridge pass a constant stream of carts, omnibuses, and carriages. Market women trudge by, youth lolls idly gazing at its own image reflected in the waters below. Boats load and unload at the quay, *gamins* spin tops, and whistle, and shriek, as they do all the world over, and have done since the first stone was laid. As the sun sets comes a beautiful picture, in which frivolous details are suppressed, and one gets an impression of glowing sky, gables, and picturesque market-boats reflected in the waters of the canal. The dainty spire, as it soars aloft, gives to the picture the final touch of pyramidal composition which Raphael loved.

[To be continued.]

NORTHERN QUEENS "AT HOME."

THE meaning of the two little words at the head of this article has passed so into the shibboleth of society that its much more valued original association has been almost lost in the transition. However, with regard to some of the Queens whom we are going to discuss, let it at once be understood that it is in the original and not in the perverted sense that we speak of them as at home. The details of the life of our own Queen are always so eagerly pursued that those of some other Sovereign ladies are likely perhaps also to interest readers of *ATALANTA*; and although it is not possible to learn all one would like of the inner life of those who are called upon to wear the crown, still many facts are patent to those who have the privilege of thus familiarising themselves with these august people, and linked together they should enable us to value them rightly.



THE QUEEN OF DENMARK.



THE QUEEN OF SWEDEN.

First we will glance at the home life of Her Majesty the Queen of Denmark, since through her daughter, our beloved Princess of Wales, she is entitled to a very prominent place in our affections. No other Royal house in Europe has furnished so many kings and queens as has this one of the little Danish kingdom, and yet the annals of the whole world of Royalties can offer nothing more delightfully simple than life at Fredensborg. To begin with the family is one of the happiest possible. The King simply adores the Queen, and she in her turn worships her husband. Their children are devoted to their parents and to each other. Queen Louise, although she is seventy-eight years of age, looks at least sixteen years younger, indeed it would seem that like her beautiful daughters Her Majesty has discovered the secret of perpetual youth. One of her favourite dictums is "If grandmothers want to keep young they must have young people about them"; and she certainly carries out this precept to the very letter,

for she has her pretty and ever hospitable home filled with juvenile friends and her numerous grandchildren. She calls herself "Aunt to all Europe, that is, where I am not grandmother," and yet no more easily pleased, no simpler or dearer old lady lives than this mighty mother of a hundred kings and queens. She hates to be hedged about with court etiquette and trammelled with all the embargo of Majesty. She goes just where she likes, and when she pleases, and every hour of her life refutes that saying of La Bruyère—"Il ne manque rien à un roi que la douceur de la vie privée." Queen Louise, with her beautiful intelligent looking face, her clear intellect, her unusual powers of judgment, tact, kindly nature, and healthy tastes, would be a woman to admire in any sphere, but as Queen of Denmark she is perhaps the best, the happiest, and certainly one of the most successful Sovereigns in Europe. She is an excellent housekeeper, but that goes without saying, for no Danish lady despises the homely arts of cookery and household management. She rises early, and finds plenty to occupy her all day. These habits of thrift and economy of time the Queen learnt in the early days of her married life, when she and her husband were comparatively poor, and many little domestic duties were obliged to be undertaken by her and by her daughters, which have only doubly endeared them to the whole world. The Queen is still a very accomplished lady, devoted to painting and music, and a liberal patron of both arts; she delights in welcoming foreign artists who come to Copenhagen to her own home, and she rarely misses a concert given in the city. In spite of all these duties, social, political and domestic, she is a most voluminous correspondent, and she writes regularly to her three married daughters and to her son, King George of Greece. She also gives much advice to her faithful subjects, who write to her on all kinds of topics, quite certain of meeting with a kind response from their beloved Queen. She is ever ready to

discuss affairs of State with the King and to aid him in every possible way; then in the evenings they sit down to a game of chess or cards, and forget that they are the sea King and Queen.

Her Majesty the Queen of Sweden is another example of a happy domesticated Royal Consort. She is a short, rather stout little lady, but with many pretensions to beauty. She is very intelligent, and takes a great interest in the politics of her country. She was Princess Sophia, the daughter of the late Duke William of Nassau, and consequently a very wealthy princess. The Swedish Court is always said to be a most delightful one to live at, for the King and Queen are so simple and even homely in all their ways, and make everyone feel at their ease. The palace at Stockholm is very beautiful, and the set of rooms used by the Queen is a charming one. Here she often receives her friends, whose name is legion, for all her husband's subjects adore her, and invent every possible excuse to be near her. On every alternate Tuesday the Royal pair are "at home" to any of their subjects who wish to come, the only necessary introduction being a visiting card, which is sent up to the audience-room. They are received with the greatest cordiality, and any petitions or requests they may have to make are listened to by the King.

Like her daughter, the Crown Princess, Her Majesty is a good cook and delights in making pretty dishes for the supper parties which follow the impromptu dances got up by her sons and daughters in the beautiful circular ball room of the palace.

Of the house-keeping talents of the German Empress much has been written, she is known throughout the length and breadth of Europe as a model mother, a perfect wife, and an absolutely faultless *hausfrau*. She can do almost anything with her needle and everything in the kitchen. Her earliest task in the morning is to make the Emperor's coffee, and many a tasty dish finds its way to the Imperial table which is the work of

her hands. Whatever trouble this world has in store for the Emperor he has at least been blessed with a treasure in his wife. He often teases her by telling her that she would make a better cook than a Queen, and that her jam is much finer than her politics; but the Empress only smiles, confident in the security of feeling that he is quite right and that she shines most in the smaller but none the less brilliant sphere of home.

Her six boys and the one baby treasure of a girl naturally make great inroads on the leisure on this charming Sovereign. She is always looking after them, both in their working and holiday hours; at one moment she is decorating the winner of a pony race with a blue ribbon, the next she is aiding the Crown Prince with his Latin exercise. It is *Mütterchen* here and *Mütterchen* there all day long, and *Mutterchen* is ever at the call of these imperious youngsters, their best friend and merriest playfellow.

The Empress is very fond of music and quite an accomplished performer on the violin, and in the evenings when they are



THE KAISER'S FAMILY.



THE QUEEN OF WURTEMBERG.

alone they enjoy quite a little concert, for the Emperor has a good voice and a correct ear, and he is delighted when his fair-haired Empress plays his accompaniments for him. Before retiring for the night she invariably writes in her diary a short account of the day's events, and the one reader of this interesting Imperial journal is her husband.

The morning is devoted to business, the Empress often spending two or three hours beside her busy Consort, helping him by suggestions and smoothing away many a tangled knot with her calm, well-chosen advice. Dinner is served at one o'clock, and the afternoon is devoted to visiting and receiving visits, to State ceremonials, and to excursions in the immediate neighbourhood in the summer. Coffee and cakes, the German equivalent for four o'clock tea, breaks the interval between dinner and eight o'clock supper, which latter is a very simple meal. The Empress always goes to her little boys' rooms to give them a good-night kiss, and to

hear them say their evening prayers; and this motherly duty she never forgets or forgoes whatever her social tasks may be. Her little daughter "Louischen" is, of course, a great pet, and the Empress is quite devoted to her, but not more so than the Emperor William, who simply idolizes her.

One of the most beautiful Queens of Europe at the present time is the blue-eyed Carola of Saxony, the wife of King Albert, who succeeded his father, John, the poet-King. Her father was the famous Gustavus Wasa, the Prince Royal of Sweden, who was exiled in Moravia, and her mother, Louise, daughter of the Grand Duchess of Baden and niece of the Empress Josephine. Queen Carola leads a happy and most useful life, and she is, as she deserves to be, greatly beloved by all her subjects, for no charity lacks her patronage and support, whether Catholic or Protestant. She was brought up in Moravia, and in the very place where her father lived in his banishment from his his own country, his daughter has founded an institute for old people known as the *Louisenhaus*. The Queen has now so many homes that, as she laughingly says of herself, she scarcely knows when she is really in her own; perhaps her favourite, as it is certainly that of her husband, is the lovely little villa at *Strehlen*, about forty minutes' walk from *Dresden*. It is so daintily furnished and has so many pictures and treasures in it, besides being surrounded by a delightful garden full of every flower which its Royal mistress loves, that it is no wonder they spend so many months there. The Royal *Schloss* at *Dresden* is a veritable museum of art treasures, but the Queen only spends the three months of the season there, when she enjoys the opera and the concerts which are such a feature of life in the Saxon capital. At *Rehfelds* they have a small hunting lodge where the Empress of Austria often stays with the Queen, and at *Pilnitz* on the *Elbe* visitors are entertained by water parties.

Queen Carola has some such valuable jewellery that soldiers have to guard the

treasury day and night. She looks truly regal with diamonds flashing on her white neck and in her raven-black hair; and yet withal she is such a perfectly placid, happy looking woman that one never thinks of her as being one of those envied yet often unenviable mortals, a Queen-Consort.

Another beautiful Royal Consort is Queen Charlotte of Wurtemberg, who reigns over her little kingdom with that ineffably subtle power which only a perfectly lovely woman can wield. Her childhood was spent between her father, Prince Wilhelm zu Schaumburg Lippe's, two residences, the summer days passing in the enjoyment of a healthy outdoor life, the winter being the time for living at Schloss Nachod in Bohemia, where, together with her brother, the Princess used to devote whole days to skating, a pastime she still much delights in at Stuttgart.

In April, 1886, when she was only twenty-two, the Princess Charlotte married Prince Wilhelm of Wurtemberg, the heir presumptive to the throne. He was a widower with one daughter, Princess Pauline, who is about to marry Prince Christian, the eldest son of the Crown Prince of Denmark. The relations between Queen Charlotte and her step-daughter have always been most happy, and the Queen makes no secret of the great blank her marriage will make in her life. They ride together, skate together, study together, and in fact are inseparable companions. It is perhaps the one great sorrow of her life to the Queen that she has no sons or daughters of her own, and this sorrow must, unfortunately, be deepened when Princess Pauline leaves her. Her chief studies are architecture and history, but she is such a thoroughly broad-minded and intellectual woman that all the sciences and arts appeal to her. She was at the time of her marriage led to interest herself very much in all local charitable works through her mother-in-law, Queen Olga, who died soon after, and she is always endeavouring to help on struggling genius; at the Royal Schloss at Stuttgart many a scholar, many a

musician, and many an artist finds a welcome from the dignified, thoughtful, and always gracious Royal Châtelaine. She herself is both musical and fond of painting, and all her rooms in the Schloss evidence her tastes in these pursuits. Her brothers are often guests of the Queen, and many merry skating or riding expeditions are organised when they come, in which Princess Pauline is ever included. Stuttgart is an ideal winter residence, and perhaps no happier home is to be found within its interesting walls than that of the King and Queen. Just lately the Queen, who is passionately fond of dancing, has succeeded in restoring the valse to the ball programme at her court, for it has long been tabooed by all the Teutonic Sovereigns.

Among the highly accomplished European queens, we must give a very prominent place to Queen Marie Henriette of Belgium. She is a daughter of the Archduke Joseph Palatine of Hungary, and therefore a member of the great house of Hapsburg; her great grandmother being Maria Theresa.



THE QUEEN OF THE BELGIANS.



QUEEN CAROLA OF SAXONY.

Whether in the Palace at Brussels, or at the Chateau de Laeken, the Belgian Royal Family lead a very simple life; both the Queen and her daughters are of a studious disposition, and now that she has only one of them left Her Majesty has even more leisure to devote to her favourite pursuits. She reads a great deal, and is an authority on all educational questions; at one time she edited a magazine for young girls, which was a favourite with many Belgian families. Her Majesty has had much sorrow in her married life, her only son, the Count of Hainault died when he was ten years old, then her daughter Stephanie lost her husband, the Archduke Rudolph of Austria, under very tragic circumstances, and lastly, both the King's family and that of his brother the Count of Flanders, was plunged into violent grief by the sudden death of Prince Baldwin. Between these two families the very greatest friendship prevails, and the Queen often says of her brother-in-law, his charming Countess, and his two daughters and

remaining son—"I love them all, the young ones as my own." Many a cosy little dinner is enjoyed by these Royal cousins and brothers in the Palace or out in the pretty Chateau at Laeken, where much of their time is spent. The Queen, when there, lives the serenely happy life of a Belgian *châtelaine*, save that she has one ever present, shadow in this much-loved home, the ex-Empress Charlotte of Mexico, whose rooms are here, and to whom Her Majesty has been most kind and attentive, doing whatever she found possible to brighten the dark days which this Royal lady has been fated to endure. At Ostend, at Aix la Chapelle, or in Brussels, the Queen of the Belgians is always one of the smartest of women, but when she can really feel herself at liberty to do as she pleases, she wears her oldest garments, and enjoys a ramble through the enviable *Parc des Roses* at Laeken, or a drive through the sequestered forest at Groenendale. Her Majesty is and always has been a most intrepid horse-woman, and nothing delights her so much as the admiration bestowed by visitors on her dainty pony carriage, drawn by the deep cream-coloured Hungarian ponies, which are such a familiar feature of the favourite Bois de Boulogne, with their long black tails and manes. These ponies are bred on one particular stud farm, and their regal owner often boasts of having driven them all through the nine provinces of Belgium; they have been everywhere, from the plains of Brabant to the forest of the Ardennes.

All the ladies connected with the Belgian court have been many years with Her Majesty, and she is always glad to keep her servants as long as possible. At home she is very bright and cheerful, and fond of impromptu entertainments, a concert being a frequent event in the life at the Palace. She herself plays well, the harp being her favourite instrument; most of her ladies are musical, and they contribute to the programme. Another of the Queen's accomplishments is etching, and many of these products of her pen are sold at the large

annual fancy fair, which is held in Brussels for the benefit of many charities.

Not many European Queens can include in their list of accomplishments that of conjuror, but the Royal lady under discussion is an adept in the black art. She took a course of lessons from Professor Hermann, and proved herself so apt a pupil that that famous conjuror was amazed. She often amuses the King and her court with her tricks and efforts of legerdemain.

Of great interest to all girls, especially, must be the young Queen of Holland, who, next to the Boy-King of Spain, is the youngest Sovereign in Europe. Little, however, is known by the outside world of the movements of the Dutch Court, for the press of the country is strictly forbidden to publish details of it, and the Queen Regent is very particular as to the strangers she admits to the Royal residences. Queen Wilhelmina, who has now emerged from school-room thralldom, is daily becoming a more important personage, for in less than two years she will be crowned in the quaint old church known paradoxically as the "Nieuwe Kerk" in Amsterdam. So far she has been merely a strictly guarded, well educated maiden of the Orange Noblesse, now she is the Queen of the Land of Dykes, graduating for honours at her own Court, and only awaiting the final ceremony of coronation before taking the sceptre of state into her own hands. At home, whether in the Royal Palace at Amsterdam, at Het Loo in Guelderland, or at Soestdijh, she is always the same bright, affectionate, but firm-willed girl, adoring her mother, who is indeed worthy of this worship, and in her turn she is idolised by all who come into contact with her. When at Het Loo, the Queen amuses herself with her miniature farm and her lovely flower garden, both of which she attends to herself; a great part of the day is, however, still devoted to reading and to needlework, for, like most of her subjects, the Queen is an adept in this. In the winter she enjoys nothing so much as a good spin on the ice, and when this is no longer possible she goes

for a walk with her faithful companion and favourite, "Swell," an Irish terrier, who is rarely separated from his Royal mistress. Up to the present the Queen Regent has chosen all her dresses, etc., for her, but she has had her say about the fitting of these, for many a little alteration has been suggested and made owing to Wilhelmina's own interference. She is a model daughter of the house in one way, for she never requires to be called in the morning, and she is always in good time for breakfast. The Queen is very patriotic in all her tastes, she often wears the national dresses of Friesland, Guelderland, Marken, or Zeeland, and she encourages in every possible way the keeping up of old Dutch customs and the popularising of Dutch goods. "I would even love 'Swell' more if he were a Dutch dog," she exclaimed to a friend, when expatiating on the merits of her country and her love of her canine companion. Such is the charming young



THE QUEEN OF HOLLAND.



THE CZARINA.

lady who will very shortly take into her hands the reins of Government in Holland.

The home-life of Her Imperial Majesty, the Empress of Russia, should, by all the laws of compensation, be a very happy one, since the public existence of the Czar and Czarina of all the Russias is one of constant trial, and of absolutely restless anxiety. With her husband, and with her lovely little daughter, the Czarina, whom many of us still think of as Princess Alix, is a happy wife and a devoted mother. The cares of State are thrown off in the comfortable nurseries of the small Grand Duchess, and whether the Royal Family are at the magnificent Winter Palace, the Kremlin, at the Anitchkoff Palace, at Peterhof or Gatschina, the presence of the little heiress of the House of Roumanoff seems to make it home. The Czarina is an essentially domesticated woman, and her friends and relatives often said of her, even as a girl, that she possessed the art of turning every place she

sojourned in into a veritable home-house. Her palaces in Russia are amongst the most luxurious in Europe, and yet that touch of womanliness which warms the whiteness of costly marble and gives life to inanimate bric-a-brac is noticeable in them. The basket, with freshly culled flowers, many of them the simplest known, the work table, with a strip of Russian embroidery half finished on it, the music on the open piano, all evidence a lady's presence and add to the beautiful surroundings.

The Empress is musical enough to amuse herself and to please her husband. She is an admirer of Russian national songs, and some of the sweet Muscovite lullabies are chosen by her to croon over her baby-daughter. Like the Princess of Wales, Her Imperial Majesty has a weakness for model dairies; at Pavlovsk she has a perfect one, to which the public are admitted. Amongst her accomplishments the Czarina includes that of being a clever caricaturist, and many a comical representation of the various pompous officials at the Court is the result of this talent. She is an expert needlewoman, particularly clever at embroidery, much of which she designs herself. In society she is a brilliant talker, and a perfect hostess.

LAURA ALEX SMITH.

MARTHA MARY.

I KNEW her when she was in socks and pinafores, and her eyes looked through a tangled mist of curls, she was vastly mischievous then I remember, often stood in the black corner with her fat hands behind her back. I can remember a little further on when her hair was tied in a tail and her black eyes tried to look demure. I thought her at this time a rather forward child and too quick of tongue.

"Poor John," she said one day, standing at the gate of the school house.

"Have you been saucy up there in the moon and got chucked out? You look quite lost, my poorest John."

After that I would not speak to her for a week, and longed to tell her mother of her conduct, but did not for shame. Her mother and I had always been great friends, and, indeed, from the age of seven, Mrs. Pringle had often consulted me on the various questions of Martha's bringing up. It was my great pleasure to sit in the front parlour and from the shadowy depths of the great arm chair deliver my opinions on things in general and Martha in particular.

I can see Mrs. Pringle now with her good flabby face crowned with the widow's cap and her round admiring eyes, I can hear the click of those ceaseless knitting pins, and the kind husky voice saying:

"Eh, John, but you're a wonderful lad! A wonderful lad! God has sent ye to comfort me, dear."

And indeed I thought He had.

From my earliest recollection Mrs. Pringle had always been a widow, and as my dear mother had lost my father a month after I was born and we were next door neighbours, it naturally drew us all very much together. But Mrs. Pringle and I were really the chief friends of the little quartette. My mother always kept herself rather aloof from our neighbours, partly, I think, on account of being a doctor's daughter and my father having been a Government clerk, and the people in our street being nearly all in trade; and partly from a love of solitude which I never understood. She was a practical woman and worked much harder than she need, for indeed we could easily have afforded a maid. But she was immovable on this subject.

"No, my son," she would say, when I pressed her. "I'm saving all the money for your education. You're going to be a gentleman, like your father."

She was ever affectionate and kind, but for sympathy and admiration I always turned to Mrs. Pringle.

I never cared for outdoor games like other boys, and indeed did not appreciate companionship of my kind. I much preferred when lessons and tea were over to go and sit with Mrs. Pringle, and there we would talk and wonder over many things.

We loved to have what I called a "wonder talk!" Looking back after many years I think that the "wonderings" of that fat husky old lady were of marvellous beauty and truth. Many I have found to be true in this world, and many I look to find true in the next. Then always, as the grandfather clock struck seven, and my mother knocked from next door, I would take down the great family Bible and read a chapter.

One day I remember reading from St. Luke of our Lord's visit to the home at Bethany, and a thought struck me.

With my finger on the verse I asked,

"Did you name Martha after the two sisters, Mrs. Pringle?"

"Yes, deary."

"But why not only Mary," I said, "*she* chose the one thing needful."

"Aye, deary, but I wanted to combine them both. Martha was such a useful creature."

I shook my head in disapproval.

"You should have called her Mary," I said.

"And may I ask why, Mr. Impudence?" cried a merry voice at the door. I coloured up quick, as was my way when surprised or annoyed, but stood my ground.

"Because," I said, "you might have grown more like her then; as it is you are a perfect Martha. You care for nothing but doing, doing, doing all day long. You never think."

Martha put her head on one side and looked at me with her finger in her mouth and her saucy eyes half drooped.

"And yet," she said, "I always try and think before I *do*, Mr. Philosopher. I have never tried to strike a candle on a match box, I have never gone to school without my cap, I have never—"

But here I cut her short with a voice I tried to keep steady and dignified.

MARTHA MARY.

"Good night, Mrs. Pringle, I must go home now."

"Good night, deary," she replied, looking from me to the other with troubled eyes; "Don't mind what Martha says."

"Of course not," I said, but conscious of a suspicious choke in my voice.

"What have I done?" cried Martha anxiously. "Have I made him cry—and him fifteen? Oh, John, John, I *am* sorry!"

But I had rushed from the house and slammed the door. I hated her then.

At this time Martha and I were always falling out—or rather I fell out, because Martha never lost her temper.

It made me very unhappy. I am a man now and do not mind confessing that often my pillow was wet with tears on Martha's account. It grieved me that Martha cared so little for the things that I and Mrs. Pringle loved, and it also grieved me that Martha was so strong and tall and I was so slight and delicate.

"She has no soul," I said in the bitterness of my heart, "she can only appreciate fellows who play cricket or jump their own height!"

About this time a great change happened in my life. My mother decided to send me to a boarding school. It had all been arranged before she told me about it.

I remember rushing in to tell Mrs. Pringle of the news.

"Eh, lad," she said, rather sadly, "ye'll be a great man one day, but don't let them teach you everything—leave some room still for your wonderings, my dearie."

I looked at Martha: her dimples came and went.

"I am hoping they will appreciate you there, John Angus," she said.

After that the days simply flew until the evening before my departure arrived. I was leaving so early the next morning that I determined to say good-bye to my friends the night before.

Mrs. Pringle was sitting by herself in her arm chair when I went in, and it cut me to

the heart to see that Martha wasn't there, although I had told her I was coming.

"She's just gone out," Mrs. Pringle said.

The parting between myself and my old friend was very solemn and very tender—you might have thought it had been a life-long parting. Perhaps she had a feeling that we could never be quite the same again.

I went out with wet eyes into the darkness. As I neared the gate I stumbled against a figure leaning there. It was Martha.

"Good-bye, John," she said.

"Good-bye, Martha," I answered bravely. "I—I am going to try and learn football—and things at school—so that you may think more of me."

"O little John," said Martha softly, "Oh, little blind John Angus!" and she took my face between her two hands and kissed me.

It was three years before I saw Martha Mary again. The reason of this was that I spent my holidays with an uncle near my school, and my mother joined us there. I heard once or twice from Mrs. Pringle, but her letters were stiff and painstaking, and told me nothing of the dear soul that wrote them, and three times I heard from Martha—queer ill-spelt little epistles. I have them still.

It was an afternoon in late June when I stepped from the train on to the well-remembered platform. The sun was shining on my head and the scent of growing things was in the air. There was no one there to meet me, for I had come by an earlier train than I had mentioned.

Taking up my bag, I marched briskly out of the station and round the familiar turning by the church. My heart was bumping against my new coat, and the prospect grew a little misty now and then before my eager eyes. The long narrow High street was almost deserted, save for a huge dray drawn up by the "Blue Lion," and a few children playing round the Cross. But as I looked a figure came round the corner by the blacksmith's shop, and I knew it was Martha Mary.

I can remember flushing crimson and holding out my hand without seeing very distinctly. Then somebody took my hand in a cool firm clasp, and somebody said, in such a *well-remembered* voice—aye, until the day break and I hear it again—

“Well, Mr. John Angus?”

“Well, Martha,” I said.

Then she laughed, and I saw her plainly.

I recollect that my first feeling was one of keen disappointment—she was as tall as myself! My next was hardly translatable. You see I was nineteen and she—she was the bonniest woman that ever lived.

“Our mothers are together waiting for you, hadn’t we better come?” said Martha, and I saw that her dimples were just the same. This fact put me on my mettle. I had yet to show her that I was not the little John Angus that had gone away, but the John Angus who had won the scholarship in Balliol, and that—well—*some* people thought great things of.

Yet we walked in silence until we came to the little grey houses in a row.

Martha opened the door.

“Mr. John Angus!” she said with a curtsy. My mother rose up quietly and kissed me. Mrs. Pringle held out her hands.

“I’m blinder than I was, dearie,” she said, “and I can’t get up.” I went to her and she pulled me down, so that I knelt by her side. Then she took my face in her old trembling hands and looked long into my eyes.

“They haven’t spoilt ye, my lamb,” she said, and kissed my forehead. I did not dare to look at Martha to see if she was smiling.

Then the little maid brought in the tea, and we all sat round the table with the door wide open into the garden behind us, and the smell of all sweet things in the air. I found my tongue then and talked to them. I told them of the great thoughts that men were thinking, of the deeds that they were doing “of the clash of intellects and the strife of tongues.” I think I had never spoken so well before. Martha’s eyes were

shining and her mouth quivered. She bent forward.

“Mr. John Angus,” she said, “you—have buttered that piece of bread and butter on *one* side already.” I looked at her with pained dazed eyes. My enthusiasm evaporated and left me cold. She was still Martha—only Martha after all.

Mother and I left soon after this and spent the rest of the evening quietly by ourselves.

“Martha is very beautiful,” I said, as we sat together in the twilight.

“Yes,” she answered, and then after a slight pause, “and such a useful girl too. Did you notice the difference in Mrs. Pringle’s house? It used to be so slovenly.”

“Does she read at all?”

“I shouldn’t think she had much time, besides, it is hardly necessary in her position. Tell me more about your work, dear.”

I told her, but all the while my mind was devising a wonderful scheme.

I would teach Martha Mary myself. Together we would read, and I would take her hand and lead her into that great region of thought, where at last we should have common interests and she would understand. It was an intoxicating idea. I remember I dreamt of it all night. The next morning, directly after breakfast, I went next door to put my plan into execution. I found Martha dusting the ornaments and Mrs. Pringle laboriously reading by the window.

“Good morning,” I said, feeling all of a sudden very conscious of my new blue tie and Martha’s quiet inspection.

The ladies wished me good morning and Martha went on dusting.

“When will you have finished your household duties, Martha?” I said.

Her dimples came with a rush.

“When I go to bed,” she said.

I fidgeted on my chair and looked at my boots, which were new.

“I—I had a scheme—for while I was down here,” I said lamely, “I thought we might do some reading together. It would help me.”

"Why not read with mother," she replied, "she has more time."

"It doesn't matter," I said, getting up and stumbling over a stool. "I daresay you are very busy. Good morning, Mrs. Pringle."

I don't know how I got out of the house, but I did somehow. It was a bitter disappointment. No, we should never be any nearer to each other, Martha and I.

But after the first hurt feeling had passed, anger began to take its place.

She should never know how hurt I was—I would go into the garden and read and smoke—yes, and enjoy myself. I chose a seat under the lilac tree in full view of my neighbour's back windows, and after whistling a few bars of a new comic song, settled myself to read.

I don't know how long I had been there, when a voice said—"Don't you think that some of Mrs. Beeton's recipes are rather expensive?"

I started and look up. Martha was leaning over the wall and trying to look grave. I glanced with sudden horror at the volume in my hand—it was my mother's cookery book! I sent it skimming along the laurel bushes and sprang to my feet.

"I am always glad to afford you any amusement," I said with crimson cheeks, "but I almost think you have had enough for this morning. Please excuse me," and I strode off with great dignity down the garden path. She waited until my hand was on the gate and then she said—

"Are you going, John? I wanted to talk to you."

I hesitated—was lost—and looked back. She was still leaning on the wall with her round chin resting on her hands. The strong sunlight changed her dark hair into a dull red glory and her eyes were quiet and dreamy in the shadow.

If she would have shown one dimple I would have gone on.

"Well," I said, coming back rather sheepishly.

"John," she said, "to please me go and

pick up your mother's cooking book. It is spoiling there on the grass."

"To *amuse* you," I said, and brought it to her with a fine show of easy indifference.

There was a pause, and then Martha said, with a sidelong glance at my sullen face.

"Would it really interest you to try and teach such an ignoramus as myself?"

"O Martha," I cried in delight.

She half turned away from me and began to pull up little bits of moss on the wall.

"What good would it do?"

"It would draw us much nearer together!" I said impetuously. Martha blushed. I had never seen her do it before, and the effect was too enchanting for words.

"I said what good would it do?" she repeated severely.

"Darling," I replied, with a clever but vain effort to catch the rooting up hand above me, "need you ask?"

There was a sudden quick movement and Martha had disappeared.

"Good morning Mr. John Angus," a voice said from the other side, "I have to go in to make a cake. You—you must think of a better reason."

Now it is a curious thing, that although on paper I seem to have been worsted all through this interview, yet it left me with a curious sense of elation. Martha would come to me yet and I would teach her—yes, I would teach her many things. Some, perhaps, not included in an ordinary young lady's education.

That afternoon I spent in looking up old acquaintances, and everywhere I heard the praises of Martha Mary.

She was the Vicar's right hand—she taught in the Sunday school and she had been to nursing lectures and often helped to nurse poor people. This all made me feel very cross and small.

"Oh, my dear, my dear," I said to myself, "It is time I came back—they are making you into a regular Martha. Mary isn't in it."

That evening I wrote her a little letter.

"Dear Martha," I wrote.

"*Please*, let me read out loud to you for an hour every morning. It will help me very much if you will allow me to do so. I would ask my mother, but she is too busy.

"Yours sincerely,

"JOHN ANGUS."

The reply came quickly :—

"Dear John,

If you will explain the long words and be *very* patient you can come at 11 o'clock to-morrow.

"Yours sincerely,

"MARTHA."

The next morning dawned fair and beautiful, I did not know then that it was the great festival day of my life : we never do. I remember that I took a long time dressing that morning and whistled every tune I knew. Just as the clock was striking eleven, I presented myself at my neighbour's door. The little maid told me that Miss Martha was in the garden, and thither I followed her. She was stooping over a bed of mignonette as I came down the path perhaps it was the exertion of bending that brought the lovely colour to her cheeks. If so, I advise all young maids to bend over beds of mignonette when—when young men come to see them.

"Have you brought the book?" she said with a frown (why she frowned I don't know).

"Yes; it is Ruskin's '*Sesame Lilies*,'" I answered meekly.

"Can I go on weeding while you read?" she asked.

"No," I said, still meekly; "You must come and sit beside me on this seat."

"Well," she said, ungraciously, "I can't waste every morning like this," but she came and sat by my side. A white syringa tree hid us from the house, and over our head climbed a purple westeria.

I cleared my throat and read the first page grandly, and then as I turned the leaf, I looked sidelong round at Martha just to see if she was listening. Now Martha was looking straight at me, and there were tears in her dark eyes.

Then a strange and wonderful thing happened, for the heavens opened, and knowledge came to me like a thunderbolt from God.

In a moment I had both her hands in mine and the book was on the ground.

"Martha, I love you," I said.

She tried hard to turn away from me, but she couldn't, you see, because I had both her hands in mine.

"Don't be—foolish, John Angus," she replied.

"My love, my sweetheart, can you love me a little?"

But she would not answer, and a bold thought came into my head—for love makes you both bold and strong. I took both her dear hands in one of mine, and with my disengaged hand turned her face towards me.

"Look at me, my dear," I said. Now her face was as red as a rose, and there were tears on her long eye-lashes, and her lip trembled, and how could she look at me who was as bold as brass? Then my poor dear, seeing how hopeless it all was and how fast she was a prisoner, just did the very best thing in the world—for she hid her face upon my shoulder.

After a long while—such a beautiful while I said :

"I am going to call you Mary, my darling."

But my love sprang up in sudden passion.

"No, no, John," she cried, "call me Martha—I *am* Martha. Oh, my John, my John, be satisfied with poor Martha—I shall never be anything else."

Then she fell into such bitter weeping that I had to take her in my arms again and comfort her.

After a while, with her wet cheek against mine, she said :

"I want to tell you, John, that I have tried to read ever since you went away. I have borrowed your old books and read them when I went to bed. I have tried so hard to understand. I have lain awake at night, trying to see things as you see them. But

once—when I was very discouraged—I came across this verse, and it has comforted me ever since. It says: ‘and Jesus loved Martha, and Mary, and Lazarus.’”

There came a long silence between us after this, and when I stooped to kiss my dear I was not ashamed that my eyes saw things blurred and indistinct.

Then we rose, and hand in hand walked down the garden-path towards the house.

O, the glory of all mingled colours and the sunlight on the white lilies—the earthly music in the air, and the Power of God, Who is love within us. The earth shook and the Heavens shouted—God from eternal habitations spoke to us, and Martha and I walked hand in hand.

“John,” said my sweetheart, trying to hide the dimples that would come, “you have gone away and left me. Please come back.”

Then I remembered, and came back to earth, looking rather foolish.

We went in and told Mrs. Pringle. I don’t think she quite understood; her memory was failing her very much at this time.

“Make it up, dears,” she said, anxiously, looking from one to the other, “it’s so wrong to quarrel.”

“We haven’t been quarrelling,” I answered, indignantly, “we—love each other.”

“Ah, that’s right—that’s in the Good Book, John.”

“Never mind,” Martha whispered, “I will explain to her afterwards. Go and tell your mother.”

I did as she said. My mother was in the kitchen. I went up to her and kissed her.

“Mother,” I said, simply, “I am very happy. Martha is going to marry me.”

She seemed dazed for a moment, and it struck me, as I looked at her, how old and lined her face was getting.

“You surprise me, dear,” she said, quietly, and then added quickly, “but Martha is a good girl—a very good girl.”

“Are you pleased, mother?”

“I am pleased that my dear son is happy.” Then suddenly she looked down at her worn

hands. “I think I shall have a maid now, dear, until Martha comes. I am getting very tired.”

I kissed and comforted her, and went out again to the sunshine and my love.

I remember that in the afternoon we went for a long walk in the country, and I recollect how we laughed, because everything seemed so new to me—the sky and the trees, the flowers and the sun—a new world.

“I wonder if young men see new worlds every time they are in love,” Martha said, pensively.

“Dearest,” I replied, with great reproach, “they can only be in love once.”

“Isn’t that what they tell the next girl?” asked Martha, sceptically.

“I think,” I replied, trying not to show her how extremely hurt I was at these uncalled-for remarks, “I *think* that my sweetheart has gone away; *she* wouldn’t talk like this.”

There was silence for a minute, and then Martha gave my arm a squeeze.

“Here she is, John,” she said. “I called her, and she’s just come rushing back.”

I looked round, and there indeed she was, my heart’s desire, with dimples and saucy eyes, and little curls that strayed upon her forehead.

“John,” she said, next moment, “you shouldn’t; there’s young Dr. Philip coming down the lane.”

“Well,” I said, defiantly, for I had heard of this young man before, “it will teach him his place.”

But it seems that he had yet something to learn, for he favoured me with a most vindictive scowl as he passed, which I thought most unbecoming in a doctor or a gentleman.

By-and-by we found ourselves down by the river, and there we sat among the yellow king-cups and little pink-tipped daisies until the stars began to peep above the Fenley Woods. Martha had been plaiting herself a crown of feathery grass and clover.

“You are never idle, dear,” I said.

She looked at me a moment, as if puzzled

by my tone, and then swept her pretty work from her lap into the river.

"There," she cried, "now I will lean back and think great thoughts." But there was a little tremble in her voice.

"To-morrow, dearest," I said, "we will begin our reading together. I have been thinking of it so much."

She turned in the darkness and took my hand.

"But to-night, dear," she said. "*Just* for to-night, let me be Martha and you be little John."

Then as she spoke a curious feeling came over me, it was as if I, lying on my face by the river, was really a very little earthly John indeed, and that she was such miles and miles above me sitting with her head against the sky.

The feeling was so strong that it seemed as if she was going from me, and I sprang up and put my arm about her waist.

Thus we sat until across the meadows the bell from the Parish Church struck ten.

"Come," she said, and we went home through the Fenley Wood, across the Common and down the High Street to our little grey houses in the moonlight. So ended the great festival day of my life.

The next morning our reading began. Martha had promised to give up two hours every morning from 11 to 1. We had arranged that we should read in the garden when it was fine, so as not to disturb Mrs. Pringle. I am not *quite* sure that our first day's reading was a success.

In the first place Martha stipulated that she must have something to do, just to help her to think.

"Well," I said, "I think you might have a note book and just jot down anything you don't understand or want to ask me about afterwards."

Martha thought this a capital idea, and borrowed my note book and a pencil."

I began reading slowly and clearly and keeping the tail of my eye on Martha, so as to see if she was following. But I never

saw more concentrated attention. By and by, as I grew more interested in what I was reading, I heard the scratching of her pencil.

This pleased me very much, but I made no remark until I came to the end of the chapter, and then I could wait no longer.

"Let me see your notes, sweetheart."

She gave a little start.

"Oh, dearest," she said hurriedly, "I've—I've only made one, please don't look yet!"

But I took the book from her hand.

The disappointment was very cruel. There was indeed only one note written in a careful round hand and partly erased.

"What does it all mean?" And below was a drawing.

"May I enquire," I said grimly, "what this round spotted thing with a beak is intended for?"

"O, darling," she answered indignantly, "It hasn't a beak! It's meant for you."

I shut up my book with a snap.

"Come for a walk, Martha?" I asked.

"No, John, I want you to read to me," she replied. "Darling, darling, *please* try me again!" I tried to look away, but could not, and finally sat down and put my arm round her waist, and began once more. This time we got on better, and my sweetheart's anxiety to understand and make sensible remarks was indeed quite pathetic. After this, our readings progressed more smoothly, but I must confess to being often very discouraged and disappointed, and I am afraid I sometimes showed this in my manner. Patience had never been a strong point with me. But our first serious falling out occurred over Martha's district. She had an out-lying little village where twice a week she used to visit. I wanted her to give this up while I was there, and this she refused to do, although she did give up one of her days.

"I can't do any more, John," she said, "because there is no one to take my place."

Now, I was in a vile temper that day, and I said, "There must be some other attraction besides the dirty people."

She did not answer. I think she was trying to puzzle out what I meant.

"Doesn't Dr. Phillips live there?" I asked.

Then she turned and looked at me, and I stooped down and untied my boot-lace and tied it again.

"Well, John?" she said.

"I apologise, Martha," I said, humbly. "I didn't mean it, dear. I've—I've got such a beastly headache."

"Poor sweetheart," she said, and slipped her dear hand into mine.

After this the subject was dropped, but it still rankled in my mind.

Now, about a week before I went back to Oxford something occurred which forced Martha to give way. I heard in the town that scarlet fever had broken out at Merton; the Vicar told me in the High Street. I ran back immediately to tell her, for she was going to her district that afternoon. I must confess I was a little pleased. Martha was greatly distressed.

"Oh, poor people!" she said, "and they are so helpless! If it wasn't for mother, John, I should go at once. I have nursed scarlet fever before.

"And, pray, don't I count?" I asked, grimly.

"Of course, darling, but you are going away in a few days. I almost wonder the doctor hasn't sent for me. I have nursed there so often last year."

"Do you belong, then, to Dr. Phillips, that he can send for you?" I asked, trying to speak quietly. "Now, you hear me, Martha, I distinctly forbid you to go near the place!"

"John!" She considered gravely. "You mustn't speak to me like that."

I paced the room for a few moments, and then turned to her.

"Dear," I said, "I ask you, for my sake, not to go."

"I promise," she said, simply.

The next few days she was very quiet and thoughtful, and I think her mind was greatly with the poor people at Merton, particularly with a certain family of little children, where she visited.

"The mother is so foolish," she said to me, "and I am sure won't know what to do."

I could not help feeling a little bit sore in my mind that she thought so much about these little strange children and so little about the nearness of our first great separation.

"You do worry about things, dearest," I grumbled.

"Poor Martha," she replied, with sudden dimples in her cheeks. But I was really vexed with her, and went off for a walk by myself.

Now, the next day, Friday, was the day before I left—our last day together. We had arranged to have one final reading in the afternoon, as I would be so busy all the morning in getting my books and things together.

Martha had told me she was going to walk to Lutworth Farm in the early part of the day, on a message for her mother.

"But that is on the road to Merton," I remember objecting at the time.

"Do you think the temptation will be too much for me?" she answered, laughing.

That afternoon, directly after our early dinner, I sent next door, longing to see Martha again, and with contrition in my heart for many things that had happened between my dearest and myself.

Mrs. Pringle was sitting knitting by herself, and I noticed a half-puzzled, half-vacant expression on her face.

"John," she said, "I can't make out this note—a boy has just brought it from Martha."

I took it with a strange foreboding at my heart.

"Dear Mother," it ran.

"Please don't be alarmed at my not coming back to dinner, as I had to go on to Merton, I have gone to Dr. Phillips to get disinfected, and will be back to-night. Tell John I will explain.

"Your loving

"MARTHA."

For a moment I stood there perfectly dumb with pain and bitter disappointment.

She had gone—my Martha had gone—on our last day—and after her promise. I tried to speak two or three times, but no sound came between my parched lips. At last I said in a queer constrained sort of voice that I did not recognise. "Please tell Martha that I had to leave earlier—and say good-bye."

"Of course, dearie, of course," she answered, smiling at me in her foolish, pathetic way. "It will be all right." Then I left the house. I went straight home, wrote a little note to my mother, who was outstretched my bag, and went to the station.

I remember vaguely that I just caught a train, and that for the first half-hour I leant back in my corner, making up all sorts of foolish rhymes to the beating of the engine, and then suddenly, without warning, anger seized me, shook and overpowered me, and I was not myself. And now, lest for one single moment you should doubt my love, my sweetheart, let me tell you what really happened on that terrible day. I heard the whole story—afterwards.

It is a story that you will hear again—read out before assembled nations—on a certain day that is to come. Teddy Barton told me himself, when he could sit up and was convalescent. He belonged to the family of the little children that Martha loved. He said:

"My brothers and Luey had been taken to the school-house, which was used as a hospital during the fever. I was at home with mother, and that morning she went out and left me; my throat was burning hot, and my head ached, and I climbed out of the window and ran along until I felt giddy, and I fell down in a ditch. They tell me it was near Lutworth Farm. I thought that a lot of bees came and stung me all over, and I screamed. Then I remember somebody said: 'He has the fever,' and I looked and it was Miss Martha. I thought she stood a long time looking at me, and then she said, 'I don't know what Martha would do, but Mary—Mary would just take you in her arms, you poor little thing, and carry you to your mother.' I don't remember what

happened for some little time, but I do remember opening my eyes once and finding myself in her arms and she was crying. She kept on saying 'I'm sure he will understand, I will explain.' That is all."

I don't recollect what I did those first few days at Oxford, it is all a turmoil in my mind. I heard from mother, but never a word from Martha or Mrs. Pringle. I longed, I thirsted for news, but my stubborn pride would not let me write.

A week passed, a fortnight, and still no sign; may my mother be forgiven for hiding the truth from me. At last came a telegram from the Vicar, "Martha is dying, come at once. The School, Merton." The Church clock struck one as I knocked at the Hospital door. A nurse opened the door—I forgot what she or I said, but I know I pushed my way through and found myself in a large white room filled with beds, with a screen at the further end, from behind which a man's voice was saying some prayer.

I went there as if by instinct, and the man rose and let me pass. She was lying there very white and solemn, the candle light from the shelf above falling on her face. I knelt by the bedside and took both her hands in mine. Would she never open her eyes, never look at me again. Dear God, dear God! After all, was this Martha, this white child with short dark hair? Could my Martha look so solemn? This was my love, and she was dying. I put my cheek against her cheek—close, so that she should feel me, so that she should not leave me. Yet no sign. She *must* speak to me before the eternal silence. "Little sweetheart," I said. "Little lamb. Oh, Martha, Martha!"

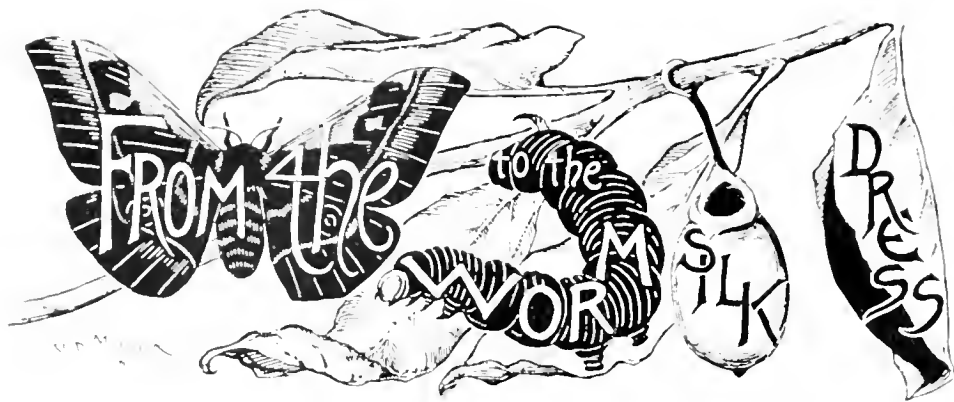
Then her dear eyes opened and she saw me. She tried to smile—a smile with no dimples, poor little love.

"Martha," I said, and for the life of me I could say no more—no last message, no asking for forgiveness. Then she spoke.

"Call me Mary, dearest," she said.

So passed my Love.

E. FARMILOE.



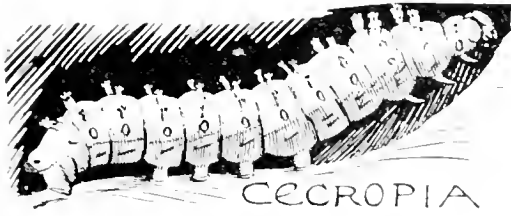
MARY, in her "gloss of satin and shimmer of pearl," doesn't realise that she owes a great deal of the effect she creates to the exertions of a worm, which, in order to provide itself with a home during a portion of its life, spins around itself a cocoon composed of a glossy fibre, which, when unwound or carded, gives us the thread called silk. This, when woven, makes the most beautiful fabric known to, and beloved of, woman. One wonders what women of fashion did in old days when silk was unknown, for the Greeks of classic times cannot have used it, and in Rome silk was worth its weight in gold, so scarce was this beautiful textile. It was not till the middle of the sixth century that the Chinese worm was introduced into Europe, and Gibbon speaks of the produce of Corinth, Thebes, and Argos in the tenth century, showing that sericulture had taken firm root in Greece.

When a boy I, like a good many other boys, kept silkworms, but I only dimly realised that those small long-oval cocoons of pale yellow fluff gave us the material called silk, for my attempts to wind those cocoons were far from successful, and by a train of reasoning very common to youth I began to doubt whether the Chinese, or any other people, could do what I failed in doing.

My attention has been re-directed to the subject of silkworms and silk production since the Zoological Society has in its insectarium in the gardens bred some of the large silk-

producing moths, and the result of my studies there, together with my groping in the Hope Entomological Museum at Oxford, may be of interest to the readers of this Magazine.

Silk-producing moths belong to the family of Bombycidae, and constitute a large and important genus, of which the Oak Lappet and Emperor moths are the typical representatives in this country. The former is a fairly common moth, somewhat the colour of a brown oak leaf in late autumn, and as its larva feeds on the oak, its colouring is eminently protective. It differs from most other moths in the position of its wings when at rest, which is shown in the sketch, the usual position of the wings of moths being flat over the body, and not upright and touching each other, as in butterflies. The Emperor moth is in colouration very similar to some of its American cousins, *Cecropia* and *Polyphemus*, as can be seen by a glance at the illustrations. The Bombycidae, in passing from the worm or larva state to the pupa or chrysalis state, make a cocoon consisting in some species of a continuous thread, which can be reeled, and in other species of a fluffy mass, which can only be carded and spun like cotton. The spinneret, as the orifice is called through which the secretion is forced, and by contact with the air instantly hardens into silk, is just below the mouth of the caterpillar, and it may be said that all larvae, whether of butterflies or moths, have the power of spinning silk, for we find that in

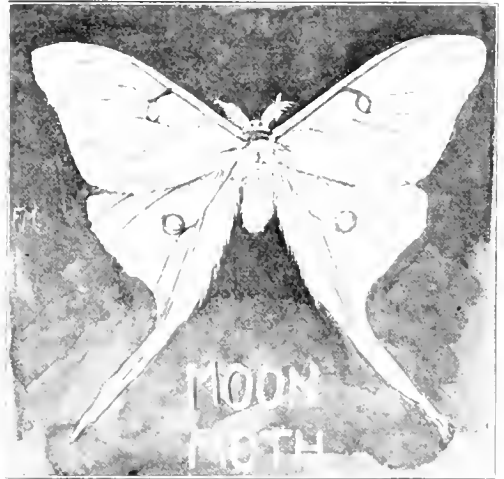


the final change which takes place those butterflies, like the swallow-tail, which attach themselves in the pupa state by a thread they spin around them and around a blade of grass or leaf stem, effect this in just the same way as the silk moths, only in the one case it stops short at this lashing of the pupa to a plant, while in the silk-producing moths it is carried to the extent of a cocoon containing, may be, many hundreds of yards of silk thread.

The common silkworm I kept as a boy is the species which gives by far the largest amount of the silk of commerce, and is the one which has been cultivated for the last 600 years or longer in Italy and the South of France. Known to science as *Bombyx Mori*, it is the smallest of the silk-bearing moths, and is quite an insignificant insect, of a yellowish-white colour, and has been so long domesticated as to be no longer found wild, even in its native home, China. The Chinese have used this silkworm for so long a period that it is safer not to attempt to fix a time when it was first employed, and their skill in

weaving and dyeing silk reached a high state of excellence centuries ago.

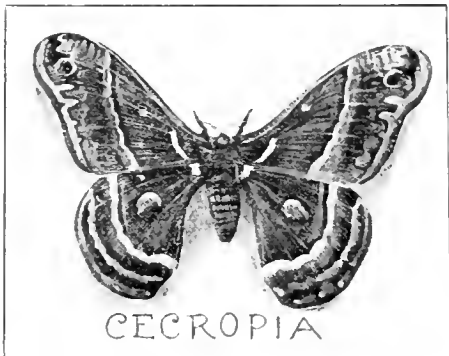
The wife of the celebrated Emperor Hoang-ti (2602 B.C.) is said to have personally assisted in the care of the insects. The industry extends through the whole of China, with the exception of the extreme Northern provinces, and besides exporting some ten million pounds, enough silk is produced to clothe the whole of the immense population, with the exception of the very lowest classes. Colonel Swinhoe puts the date of the introduction of the silkworm into



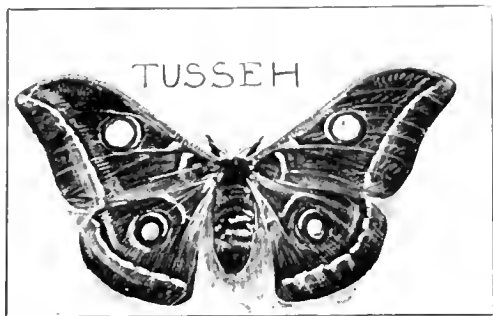
India not later than 419 A.D. A Chinese Princess who married the King of Khotan is said to have smuggled the seeds of the mulberry and the eggs of the moth in her head-dress when visiting her betrothed.

The silk yielded by *Bombyx Mori* is unquestionably the most lustrous and finest in texture of any of the *Bombyx* family and it takes the dye perfectly, while the large Tussur moth of India has the drawback that it is dyed with difficulty, though Mr. Wardle, of Leek, has succeeded in dyeing it.

In the South of France and Italy sericulture has been an important industry for



* I am indebted to this eminent authority on Indian lepidoptera for the use of a paper read by him on silk-producing moths.

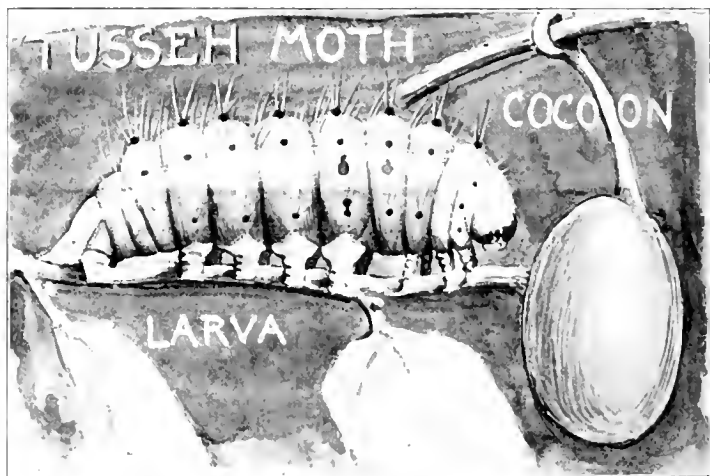


centuries, the *Bombyx Mori*, or one of its varieties, the result largely of domestication, being the one cultivated. This moth only thrives on mulberry leaves, and with the introduction of the moth came the planting of mulberry trees upon which to feed it. Several attempts have been made to introduce the culture of silk in this country. Henry VI. made an attempt, as did James I., who took great interest in the matter and tried to introduce the rearing of silkworms. In 1699 the Sieur de la Forêt travelled through the Midland and Eastern counties and distributed 100,000 mulberry plants. In 1718 a company obtained a lease of Chelsea Park for 122 years, mulberries were planted and buildings erected, but the enterprise ended in failure; and so late as 1835 a company laid down 80 acres of land with mulberries in the county of Cork, but they soon transferred their operations to Malta. It is probable that our climate is against the industry, subject as we are to violent fluctuations of temperature and constant rain, but if we did not produce the raw silk the influx of weavers from the Low Countries in 1585 and again in the next century from France established silk weaving as an important industry at Spitalfields and Nor-

wich. Silk Throwsters were incorporated in Spitalfields in 1629. Many of these weavers were keen entomologists, as a passage in one of Crabbe's poems indicates, and they used to go off on long tramps into Kent on the Sunday to collect butterflies and moths, which they arranged in geometrical patterns, and so formed "pictures," as many as 500 specimens going to form one "picture."

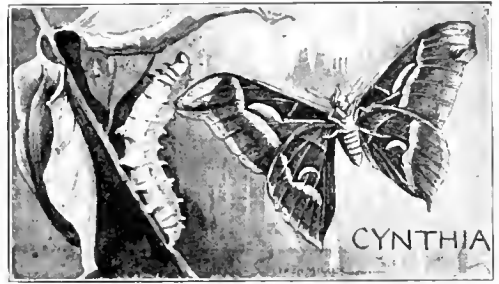
The Spitalfields silk industry had almost died out until an attempt was made by Mr. Liberty and others to revive it within the last twelve years.

Cultivation for so many centuries of the mulberry moth and the continuous interbreeding has so weakened the stock that a disease known as *muscadine* has attacked the worms, and so serious has this become that the industry in the South of France and Italy has been more than once threatened with extinction. Then for the first time in Europe attention was directed to other silk-producing moths and *Cynthia* from India and *Peryni* from North China were introduced, and the first has now become so thoroughly established in France that the moth is to be met with wild. The former feeds on the *ailanthus* and makes its cocoon inside a leaf which it rolls up for the purpose,



while the latter feeds on oak, beech, &c. It has been thought that by attention to breeding and crossing a hybrid moth might result which would be superior to any now known. Hybrids, I believe, have been raised in the insect house at the Zoo.

The Tussur moth is found wild in Assam, Behar, and Bengal. It is not cultivated, and Colonel Swinhoe told me that the natives have only to go into the woods and collect waggon loads of cocoons. The mulberry moth has lost the power of flight, but the Tussur flies as soon as it emerges from the pupa, so that its cultivation would be difficult and is never attempted. The cocoon is of a dull brownish colour and gummed together, so that it looks more like a piece of felt than silk, and to wind it the cocoon has to be soaked for some time in water, in which plantain ashes have been saturated. In spinning the cocoon the larva makes a stalk or attachment to the tree, so that the home of the pupa sways about in the wind out of harm's way instead of falling to the ground as does the ailanthus, which encloses itself in a leaf. There is a beautiful provision of nature to enable the moth to get out of its prison, for not being provided with any teeth it cannot eat its way out of the cocoon. When the time comes for the imago to appear the creature ejects some liquid (chiefly bombycic acid) which softens the cocoon and enables the moth to push its way out. Tussur silk has been largely used of recent



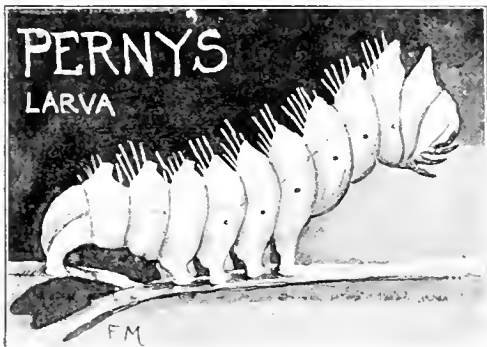
years, and is usually woven in its natural colour, a warm grey or fawn, owing to the difficulty of dyeing it.

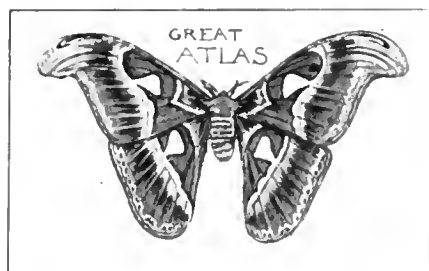
The Japanese have a near ally of *Anthera Mylitta*, the scientific name of the Tussur moth, known as Yama-mai, the silk from which is so highly valued, so Colonel Swinhoe informed me, by the Japs as a cure for rheumatism (a very prevalent complaint in Japan), that it is never exported.

The largest moth known, the Atlas of India, measuring from eleven to twelve inches from tip to tip, produces a large, well-stuffed cocoon, of excellent silk. It is such a gorgeous creature, with its transparent "eyes" and yellow and red-brown markings, that it is always an attraction in the Insect House. Many of the Bombycidae have these transparent eyes in the wings, and in the Tussur moth they look like spots made by the tip of a finger, and Hindoo superstition says that these spots are the finger prints made by Buddha upon taking up the first moth.

The natives of some parts of Central Africa find the web of a gregarious caterpillar in large masses on trees, and from it spin a thread in much the same way as we do cotton, which they use for weaving. A native who studied in Oxford forwarded a specimen to the Museum, where it now is. The silk looks very much like cotton wool. There is also shown a pair of gloves made from a greenish kind of silk spun from the beard of a large bivalve, and as an experiment silk has been spun from spiders' webs.

To illustrate the life-history of a silkworm



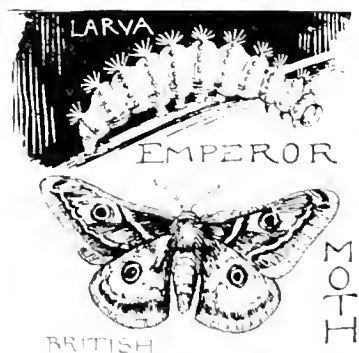


I will give a condensed account from an American scientific journal.

Among the eight or so species of silkworms in North America the Polyphemus is the only one that may be said to be of textile value. The beautiful moon moth spins a fibre so frail and thin that it is impossible to reel it. The Polyphemus, on the other hand, spins a strong, dense, oval cocoon with silk of a very strong and glossy fibre. In 1860 L. Trouvelot began his experiments in raising these silkworms, and finding two caterpillars kept them until they became moths, but both were males. In 1862 he bred a pair of moths, which were the progenitors of the large numbers he subsequently cultivated. The larvae feed on oak trees, and the difficulty was to protect the caterpillars from the birds, for, though the enclosure where the larvae fed was netted over, the small birds worked through the mesh, while larger ones found their way through holes in the net. Early in the summer the chrysalis, which has been imprisoned for eight or nine months in the cocoon, begins to awaken from its torpor. As the creature has no teeth or instrument to cut through the hard gummy substance enclosing it, it is provided with two glands, which secrete a liquid composed of a great part of bombycic acid, which softens the cocoon, and enables the pupa to push its way out without breaking a fibre. Its wings at first are small, pad-like members, and the swollen abdomen contains the nutriment, which flows to the wings to develop them and enable them to grow to the large size of the perfect insect.

The incubation of the eggs lasts ten or twelve days; the hatching takes place from five till ten o'clock, rarely after this time. As soon as it is fairly hatched out the larva continues for some time eating its egg-shell, and then crawling upon a leaf, goes to the end of it, and, after waiting a few hours, begins to eat. The Polyphemus, like other silkworms, changes its skin five times during its larval life. This moulting takes place at regular intervals, which come round about every ten days during the first four moultings, while about twenty days elapse between the fourth and last. The worm ceases to eat for a day before moulting, and spins some silk on the vein of the under surface of a leaf. It then secures the hooks of its hind legs in the texture it has spun, and there remains motionless. The moulting generally takes place after four o'clock in the afternoon. A little before this time the worm holds its body erect, grasping the leaf or twig with two pairs of hind legs only. The skin is wrinkled and detached from the body by a fluid, which circulates between it and the worm. The contractions of the worm, which increase in energy, burst the old skin, and the worm finally crawls out, newly clothed.

In reeling the cocoons, the natives take the thread from four or five, and give them a twist on their thigh as the threads pass from the cocoons to the winder. The threads are wonderfully even, and an expert winder produces a very even thread, an important factor in fine weaving.



Mr. Arthur Thomson, the Zoological Society's head-keeper, who has the charge of the insects at the Zoo, showed me specimens of carded silk of several moths reared in the Gardens, which looked most excellent in quality, being lustrous and fine in texture.

FRED MILLER.

VARNISHING DAY.

WHAT a vague phrase to the mere man in the street—but what a world of hopes and fears, of elation and disappointment, does it not conjure up in the mind of the aspiring artist, and even of him “who has come.”

For, indeed, not till his palette is hung up for the last time, and for ever, does “varnishing day” cease to be a day of import to the artist great or small.

But, queries the well informed, how can it possibly matter to some great Academician, sure of a place of honour? For him there lies not in wait the crushing card of sheer rejection, or the terribly tantalising letter of regret “that want of space,” &c., &c.; for him exist not the giddy terrors of the sky line, or the gloomy obscurity of the dark corner; true, quite true—but not all the blazoning of previous triumphs can insure him against the possible failure of his picture, hanging though it will be in its pride of place, but subjected then, for the first time, to that inexorable test—an environment of other pictures.

No painter, from the President of the Royal Academy down, goes to see how his work looks on the walls of an exhibition without some qualms of doubt and suspense, and the disillusionment sometimes, even to the most experienced, amounts to a shock.

Of course other exhibitions besides the Royal Academy have their varnishing days. In the case of the water-colour exhibitions it is, of course, a misnomer, but everything that is notable or characteristic of them finds its apotheosis in that day of days. Alas! so often

that Dies Ira “Varnishing Day” at the Royal Academy. And as the interest in Art, and things appertaining to it, is so widespread now, some aspects, features, incidents of it, may serve as material for a few paragraphs in ATALANTA.

Well, after weeks, nay, months, of anxious labour, after the cheap triumphs and admiration of Show Sunday, comes the frame-maker with his “merry men,” and incontinently, and with scant show of interest or awe for your great effort, they crowd it into a van, drive away, and on the studio there falls a void and a calm. This lasts till about the tenth day, when the postman begins to loom large and terrible to our eyes, and his knock to sound like a knell, for at this period any news is bad news, and any letter with a red seal is fraught with the worst of tidings; it contains a card curtly informing you that the Council and President cannot accept your works, Nos. . . . Still there is hope. Our great work No. . . . is not on that dread list. Again, for a week, more or less of calm prevails, though the air is full of the rumours of the mighty ones that have fallen; of men who have exhibited continuously for a generation—veritable household words—such towers of fame and strength, such Samsons, that one wonders that in their fall they did not, like him, involve the very Academy in their ruin; but that august body keeps on immovable and unassailable as Fate. Even indignant paragraphs in the halfpenny papers as to their “crass and malignant treatment” of Brown or Black, fail to bring the faintest blush to their cheeks, or to quicken their pulses by a single beat.

About the Friday in the third week from sending in, interest in the post rises again to fever heat. Good or bad, one must hear from the Academy on or before the Saturday, or the worst is to be feared. At length another of these “Scarlet Letters” is handed in. You breathe again. It is a card, inviting you to inspect such of your works as have been hung, &c., &c., on the following Monday.

Ah! how pleasantly are passed the inter-

vening days, in cheerful imaginings as to where the picture is placed, how it will look, and so on.

Some favoured individuals, indeed, have already heard, through friendly Academicians, their fortune, good or bad, but to us it is all delightfully unknown and full of possibilities.

On the Monday morning the neighbourhood of Piccadilly is noticeably besprent with individuals, paint-box in hand, and occasionally of Bohemian length of hair or fashion of coat, making for the great portals of Burlington House, mostly with pre-occupied mien. There, in a little office on the left of the entrance, the ticket is exchanged for another, admitting the person named on it to the exhibition, and entitling him or her to a catalogue gratis later on.

At length upstairs, and our neophyte is free to enter upon his search for his picture. If it is the first time he has had this experience he may find it a strange, and by no means a pleasant one. He wanders from room to room, so intent on his purpose that it is only in a dazed sort of way that he is conscious of, and returns, the greetings of friends and acquaintances. Possibly one of them, more experienced, has already found his picture, and brings him to it, but more probably they are few in this select gathering, and his quest continues in vain till he has been all round the galleries several times, and a hideous fear raises its chimera head that his picture is not hung after all.

But surely, no! It can't be! That little canvas there, just above the line, cannot be the one! Why, it looks no bigger than a post-card! And what has become of the colour and effect? The picture of his dreams for months past has simply vanished, and the real modest little work has taken the place of the changeling which looked so big and important in the studio and in his anticipatory fancies afterwards. But our friend need not, if he only knew, experience that intense shock of disappointment which is the frequent result of the disillusionment. There have been cases where, when a young artist

was shown his picture on the wall, he refused to believe it was his own work, but that it was only a small one, somewhat similar in arrangement. He had been looking among the 7 and 8ft. canvases for his modest 4ft. one.

After a time the evidently sincere congratulations of others on the place and effect of his work enables our friend's feelings and spirits to re-adjust themselves to the new order of things, and after dusting his picture, and putting a touch here and there, he is able to look around and note his surroundings.

The floors of the galleries are covered with a dilapidated felt, the couches and settees with calico coverings, on which are piled indiscriminately paint-boxes, overcoats, hats, etc. Great step-ladders stand about, whereon at giddy heights men are touching up their skied pictures. Some great canvases are hidden from view by coverings. These are pictures of Academicians, on which they have been working the last three days, and which might be injured by the dust. Lesser mortals must take their chance of that. An extraordinary sense of fresh, bright, almost crude paint, and brilliant gold frames, seems to dazzle the eye. Artists in shirt sleeves and brush in hand, and pipe in mouth; workmen, in their usual boots and fustian, shout and laugh and smoke in these rooms, ordinarily so sacred to frock coat and silk hat, and the rest of the proprieties. The odours of innumerable and unnameable varnishes engage in pitched battle with those of equally innumerable brands of tobacco and cigar. There is much hustle and moving of ladders, and tilting of pictures, and sound of many greetings.

These are usually the first sensations, but presently a sense of privilege, as of the select of the earth, soothingly pervades the soul. Your opinion will—is even now helping to stamp what are to be *the* pictures of the year. You faintly seem to hear the gnashing and wailing of the great army of the unhung outside, but, alas! for human charity, it comforts rather than saddens.

One even goes back to put a few unnecessary touches to the picture that all men may see, though presently you will laugh at the lady, whose picture being on the line, advertises the fact by ostentatiously and persistently standing before it all day, making believe to work, and who craves with charmingly simulated humility the advice of every passing Academician or notable artist. They, to give them their due, seem, if the petitioner be young and fair, by no means averse to tendering with quite beaming graciousness their advice, and even some precious touches in the extremest corner of her work. These are amongst the humours of the day, as certainly is the indignation of some artists at not having everything on the line; sometimes they have been known to rate the hangers *viva voce* and in no measured fashion.

Luncheon on that day at some neighbouring hostelry or confectioner's is a pleasant function. Little parties are made up—as a rule, feminine and masculine apart. The pictures are discussed over the cheese, possibly in louder voices than the immediate listeners require. Then there is the comfortable stroll back with a *dégagé* air not always as free from a suspicion of swagger as it might be, and the afternoon passes in a pleasant desultory classification of the pictures in their order of merit. Possibly now, in your more mellifluous mood, you re-consider the price of your own, and ask a friend or two as to the advisability of putting another tenner on. The friends, of course, think you may do so quite safely.

The day wanes, the light falls mellow and softens all crudity and paintiness in the pictures. The country artists have left to return home north, south, east, and west; and leisurely departing from this pictorial world of fact and fancy, we find ourselves in Piccadilly, and one more varnishing day, with its fortunes, is of the number of those behind us.

VAL DAVIS.

THE CRAB.

IN June, summer seems to be like a lovely woman, in the zenith of her beauty, while yet the freshness of youth is upon her. It has really all the attributes the poets assign to May, in it are realised all the hopes of spring, while the full enjoyment of them is but yet commenced. The days are at their longest, and there is no hint in them as there is in the next two months, beautiful as they are, of the coming of autumn, so soon, alas! followed by winter, chill and drear.

In the old Latin or Alban calendar, June had but twenty-six days; Romulus altered the number to thirty, and also gave it its name, either in honour of the goddess Juno, because a festival dedicated to her was held in this month, or by way of a compliment to the *junior* or inferior branch of the Roman Senate. The ancients represented June as a young man, draped in a dark green mantle, on his head a coronet of king-cobs and maiden-hair, and carrying on one arm a basket filled with summer fruits. He held upon the left hand an eagle, and in the right the sign *Cancer*, or the *Crab*.

The Saxons called it *weyd-monat*, because cattle now went to feed in the meadows; also *wold* or weed-month, and *scere-monat* or dry month.

Whit-Monday and Tuesday have been kept as holidays from a remote period, and are still solemnly observed by the Church. By the ancient law of France, all workmen engaged in laborious trades were compelled to rest for twelve days after Christmas, twelve days after Easter, and twelve days after Whitsuntide. On this third great festival of Christendom, the gates of the Royal palaces and every castle and hall, were thrown open to everyone who chose to enter and partake of the plentiful hospitality of the "*Cour plénière*." The Conqueror and his immediate descendants always kept the feast

of Whitsuntide at Westminster, and though shorter in duration, in splendour and importance it quite equalled the revels of Christmas. In those days, as at Easter, the favourite amusement of the people was tournaments, but at the end of the 13th century these were superseded by a new and still more fascinating form of entertainments, namely, the "Miracle Plays" or "Mysteries." These appealed very strongly to the ignorant, superstitious minds of that time. How they really originated is not known, but they were first played in England during the reign of Edward I. It would appear that they were the result of an endeavour made by the clergy to make the mass of the people acquainted with the outline and most interesting events of Scripture history, at the time when the English language had completed its transition from the Saxon. These miracle plays held a high station in popular opinion for about four centuries, but after the Reformation they rapidly declined and fell altogether into disuse about the beginning of the 17th century.

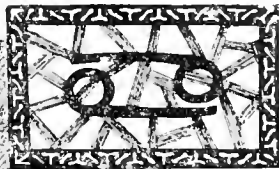
The *Church or Whitsun Ales*, derived from the *Agapai* or love-feasts of the early Christians, were formally celebrated at this time. The name was derived from the fact of the Churchwardens buying, and also receiving as gifts, large quantities of malt, which they brewed into beer and sold in the Church. The profits gained by this, and also from the games and sports held in honour of the occasion, were given partly in charity and the rest used for defraying the expenses of the decorating and repairing of the Church and the celebration of Divine service. In many places these Whitsun Ales degenerated into the love-feasts of the Friendly Societies. An old custom prevailed in the parish of Ensham, in Oxfordshire, till the beginning of the present century. On Whit-Monday the townspeople were allowed to cut down as much timber as could be drawn by men's hands into the Abbey-yard, the Churchwardens giving the first chop, to mark out the timbers. They were to keep for the

reparation of the Church as much timber as they could carry out again against the opposing strength of the Abbey servants, and by this service they held their right of commonage at Lamma and Michaelmas.

The festival of Trinity Sunday, on the Sunday next following Pentecost or Whitsunday, as observed by the Anglican and Roman Churches, was not established in Rome nor in France till the fourteenth or fifteenth century. A quaint ceremony took place at Newnton, North Wiltshire, in memory of King Athelstan's gift to that place of a common and a house for the hay-ward, or person who looked after the cattle feeding on the common. In the morning the parishioners assembled at the door of the hay-ward's house, and struck upon it three times, in honour of the Holy Trinity. The door being opened, they entered, as a bell was rung to enjoin silence, for the offering of certain prayers. After this, a maiden of the parish, bearing round her neck a garland of flowers made on a hoop, stepped forward, and was met by a young bachelor of another parish, who saluted her three times "in honour of the Trinity, in respect of God the Father." She then placed the garland upon his neck, and kissed him three times "in honour of the Trinity, particularly God the Son." He replaced the garland on her neck, repeating the triple salutation, "in respect of the Holy Trinity, particularly the Holy Ghost." He then took the garland from her and gave her some money, a penny at least. This custom of giving the garland was done from house to house annually till it came round the circle. In the evening every commoner sent his supper to the house chosen, which they called the Eale House, and having laid in an equal stock of malt, everyone supped together, and the food left over was given to the poor.

Blount, in his "*Jocular Tenures*," tells us that it was customary at Kidlington, Oxfordshire, on the Monday after Whitsun week, for the maids of that town, having their hands tied behind them, to run after a fat lamb, and the one that could catch and hold the lamb

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with her teeth was declared the *lady of the lamb*, which was then dressed and carried before her on a pole, accompanied with much singing and dancing, and the next day was cooked for the feast held in her honour.

Corpus Christi Day was fixed to fall on the Thursday after the octave of Whit-Sunday by Pope Urban IV. in 1264. In Roman Catholic countries, the Host is carried in grand procession through the streets under a splendid canopy.

Midsummer Eve, on June 23rd, appears to have been consecrated to the performance of mystic rites from very ancient days, and many highly fanciful superstitions are connected with it. The origin of bonfires and lamps garnished with flowers burning all night on the vigil of St. John the Baptist, was intended to signify that St. John was to be a lantern of light to all people. Many of the wealthier people would set out tables by their doors, near to the bonfire, furnished with food and drink for the benefit of anyone who chose to partake. This practice of having bonfires lighted was continued in Ireland to a very late date, and the inhabitants of the towns would dance around them, carrying numerous torches. In Cornwall, also, the practice was continued very late.

Another practice of Midsummer night was to keep a watch walking through the town. This was done until the reign of Charles I., and every citizen either went himself or sent a substitute, and at the first setting out of the party an oath for the preservation of peace was administered. They started at sunset, and paraded the town throughout the night, each one wearing "a garland made in the fashion of a crown imperial, decked with flowers, both natural and artificial, and ribands and jewels." At Chester this practice

of "setting the watch" continued for many years after the Great Rebellion. In London the watch during the Middle Ages would consist of two thousand men, all in bright armour, but Henry VIII., in the 31st year of his reign, prohibited the pageant, though he himself in 1510 went into "Cheape" disguised as a yeoman of the guard to watch the ceremonial. But doubtless he was afraid of such an array of armed citizens. It was afterwards revived for one year only, in 1548, by Sir Thomas Gresham, who was then Lord Mayor. There are also one or two pretty quaint superstitions regarding Midsummer Eve, of which I will give one or two examples. One is called the "dumb cake." Two must make it, two bake it, two break it, and a third places it under each of their pillows, but all must be done without speaking a word, and then they will dream of their future husbands. Another idea was that a girl should go into the garden, walking backwards, and gather a rose, which she would put into a sheet of clean paper and not look at till the following Christmas. If it was then fresh it would be a sign that her lover was near, and she would wear the flower, and he that was to be her husband would come and take it out. In Northumberland the custom is to dress out stools with a cushion of flowers, by first placing a layer of clay and then sticking in flowers to form a beautiful pattern. This is carried from house to house, and the money collected used for the evening's festivity. All these quaint conceits belong to a bygone age, the youth of the present day is far too prosaic to care for the superstitious ideas and somewhat boisterous amusements of the youth of long ago, who made merry in the month of June.

G. OLIVER-WILLIAMS.





"I HAVE realised a long cherished wish," said the engaged girl. "For years I have hankered for an accordion-pleated skirt, and knew that I must not wear one, because they only suited the thinnest and slimmest of the thin and slim. An average figure looks bumpy and awkward in them, but the new skirt is as becoming to the wearer as it is pretty in itself. At least, I hope you think so, for I am very pleased with mine."

"They are pretty," said cousin May. "It is a mystery how those long pleats, fading into smooth shapeliness round the waist are arranged, but they are very fascinating."

"I can tell you," said the engaged girl, "for I made mine. You get three yards square of material, by sewing a sufficient number of widths together, cut a circle one yard in circumference in the middle, to allow for a little fulness at the back, and fit it into a band the size of your waist, mine fits in front and draws up with cords at the back like a petticoat. Round off the edges to a circle, turn up a hem, and then send the finished skirt to be 'accordion pleated.' It is a very easy affair; much easier than making an ordinary fitting skirt."

"Well, the result as shown in your case, is certainly charming," said the chaperon. "Indeed, dressmaking is getting easier every day. No amateur can make tailor-made frocks successfully, but the fluffy much-trimmed things we wear now are within every one's capabilities. A lace berthe covers many imperfections, and any one who cannot machine the seams of a skirt with the proper flawless exactitude, can cover them with piping."

"I have just had a new bicycle costume,"

said the bride, "in the little black and white check that we are all to wear so much this season: that pleases me almost as much as that accordion skirt pleases you, for it has proved to me that if a bicycle skirt is properly cut, and furnished with straps, elastic straps with a loop at the end to go round the foot under the instep, it need be no shorter than the ordinary walking length, so that when one gets off the bicycle one does not look like an ungainly overgrown schoolgirl."

"I don't like paying calls on a bicycle," said the ingenue. "One gets so hot and red, and damp, and horrid, directly one stops riding. I always want to go straight home and up to my own room to hide until I cool down."

"Wear Jaeger clothing instead of ordinary cotton or linen," said the girl of three seasons. "Then you won't feel or look hot or uncomfortable. I had the reason of this explained to me very scientifically last year. Vegetables—cotton and linen are vegetables you know—live on heat, and damp, and bad air, which is poisonous to animals. So it follows, as nature always meets her own requirements, that vegetables have the power of retaining things which feed them and poison us, and animal clothing in its natural state, of throwing them off. A sheep would die of its own exhalations, the scientific man told me, if its wool were cotton."

"Did he put it quite like that," asked the younger sister

"Well, no, and I don't say I understood all he did say," answered the girl of three seasons, "but I believe it, and wear Jaeger, and I've never felt over-heated or caught cold when I rested, since."

"But there's still the red face," said the ingenue, "and one looks so very ugly with a red face."

"I can tell you what to do for that, too," said the girl of three seasons. "Carry a little box of plain calcined magnesia in your wallet. After riding, get five minutes by yourself. Mix the magnesia with water into a stiff paste and spread it over your face. Let it dry for about two minutes—don't look at yourself in the glass meanwhile, or you will scream, you will look so terrible. Then wash the magnesia off. It will take off all the sun-burn, and the prickly uncomfortable feeling one's skin has after too much sun, and leave it cool and fresh, and soft."

"That's a good thing to know this year," said the bride, "when if there is any sun on Jubilee Day, we may most of us expect to get burnt, so much of the excitement will be in the open air. It is a nice clean healthy thing, too, one need not mind doing it."

It was rather a nice idea of the Salon to give a dinner in honour of the year," said May, "it was very nice, and perfectly managed."

"What is the Salon?" asked the ingenue. "That's something I ought to know isn't it?"

"It's a sort of literary club for authors and authoresses, and singers, and painters, and artists of all minds," said the bride, "they give receptions where they can all meet each other, and invite their friends. I've been there and enjoyed it immensely. What was the dinner like, May?"

"It was a good dinner. That's the important thing. Anstey's opinion that all women left to their own choice would subsist entirely on cake doesn't apply to women who work their brains."

"I should say it doesn't apply to women who have brains," said the girl of three seasons "living on cake and tea is the surest way to lose your complexion. Who was at the dinner?"

"Oh, a great many of the best known men and women writers, and other celebrities," said May, "and Fischer and Leonie sung some of their delicious French duets, and

Mdlle. Laurens, the dearest, most fascinating little French girl conceivable, sang solos: Mr. Guilford Dudley and Arthur Wellesley recited amusing pieces, of course. They are neither of them the sort of people to "Rise at evening parties and search among the slain," as the American poem puts it.

"There's something I want to ask," said the ingenue. "Why did you say Fischer and Leonie, and Mr. Guilford Dudley?"

"I'm sure I don't know," said cousin May, "one does, but I don't know why."

"Because when anyone is well known as an artist, one considers them as artists first," said the chaperon. "It would be almost a slight to their art to put a mere courtesy title before a name that means an art to you, not a person. In the case of amateurs, or even professionals, if one knows them personally, one uses the courtesy title instinctively, because one thinks of them first as persons."

"Now I remember," said May, "the *Saturday Review*, used to call everyone "Mr." until he was dead, refusing to distinguish between those who were great enough to dispense with the title and those who were not. When they were dead, of course, the title was out of place."

RONDEAU REDOUBLE.

ON THE PORTRAIT OF AN UNKNOWN CHILD.

A laughing child with deep blue eyes,
With lips that shame the rose's red,
What future in those bright orbs lies,
What dreams and visions all unsped.

But eight short years have vanished,
Since like a snowflake from the skies,
Thou cam'st by angel footsteps led,
A laughing child with deep blue eyes.

Unknown thou art, yet I surmise,
 Some mother watches o'er thy head,
 And sings thee sweetest lullabies,
 With lips that shame the rose's red.

As flow'rs their leaves to sunshine spread
 So spreads thy life in glad surprise,
 Yet none can tell the path thou'lt tread,
 What future in those bright orbs lies.

What tears and laughers, smiles and sighs,
 Await thee in life's tangled thread,
 What discords or sweet harmonies,
 What dreams and visions all unsped.

God grant to thee when youth is dead,
 The pure, true heart which never dies,
 So shalt thou be, when youth is fled,
 At heart,—though thou art old and wise,
 A laughing child.

SISSIE HUNTER.

A TALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

IS IT EVER PERMISSIBLE FOR A WOMAN TO MAKE A PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE?

I THINK most people when asked this question would give an uncompromising negative for answer; but a little thought modifies our decision. Surely, there are cases when it is permissible, nay desirable,—cases when a woman can propose marriage without risking that modesty and self-respect which is her richest crown. Suppose a woman knows that a man loves her truly and honourably, but a super-sensitive self-depreciation, or inferiority of position deters him from asking her to marry him. Her happiness in life lies with him; but how to let him know, if he will not ask? You say, there are plenty of ways of encouraging him without taking that definite step. Perhaps; but is not a game of sentimental hide-and-seek less womanly than a plain, honest stating of the case? The straighter a woman's path is, the more truly modest it is. Woman now takes a higher stand in most things, and ought not the old traditions with regard to love and marriage to be modified in accordance with her new position? She is no longer regarded as a mere chattel to be handed over to the most eligible suitor; she is allowed to choose her own happiness, and ought to be free to judge the best method of securing it. No true woman would *wish* to take the initiative, but she would be weak, nay wrong, to risk the happiness of two lives for sake of a mere conventionality.

MARY L. ELLIOT.

I do not think that under any circumstances a woman ought to make a proposal of marriage. However truly and deeply she loved, any woman worthy the name would rather suffer in silence all

her life than give utterance to her feelings, far less offer her heart and hand before they were asked for. What humiliation she would open herself to, should the man not feel for her the same affection she entertained for him. A man may sometimes be so humble in his own opinion as to deem himself unworthy of the woman he loves (though in this age, men with so little self-confidence are rarely found), and he thus held back from asking her to marry him. When she perceives this (and she would be very blind if she failed to do so), she might give him such encouragement as to disperse his fears without being over forward. The tone of the voice, the glance of the eye, speak as much as any words. Any woman can show her love without speaking, should it be necessary, and if the man still fears to try his fate, he must be very much wanting in courage, and "None but the brave deserve the fair."

ROSE G. DRUMMOND.

THERE are cases in which, if a union is to be effected at all, the girl has to make the first advances. Sometimes wealth would divide kindred spirits, were it not that the girl has more love than pride. With royalty too, be the lady of higher rank she is compelled to "put the question." So I think in such cases it is permissible, but a very little *must* show a man whether the desired effect is to be brought to pass. I speak only, when the girl is absolutely sure of a man's love, and, there being some obstacle in the way, she, rather than allow two lives to be made miserable, takes the initiative. Bold, some people say, but it is the courage which comes from love, and therefore not to be sneered at. People say a girl can make any man propose if she chooses. If that is the case, I do not class that sort of girl with the ones, who have to show a man the first step. They are to be utterly despised who spread such nets, and gloat over their conquests. Still, truthfully speaking, I consider it very hard on the ladies, that the men are so proud, or shy, that the former have to come to the fore. From the world's beginning it was intended that man should ask for his wife, and he neglects his duty if backward in that respect.

ISABEL PEACHY.

YES, very occasionally, it is permissible. For this reason, that men are fashioned so differently and sometimes so curiously. If a girl is really sure that a man she loves returns her passion, but from shyness, or money matters, keeps his secret, I do not see why she should not propose. She loses neither her modesty nor maidenliness by doing so. It is a different matter if the girl is an adventuress, strewing her gold on the tail of the lording sparrow, that sort of girl who simply "comes to terms," has not much modesty to lose, and hardly comes under the heading of "woman." It would not do to make it a general custom that women should propose; if that came to pass, then *he* might require an engagement ring, and *she* be the giver. But what one girl does quietly there is no need for the world to censure, nor will they copy it. The girl with a good reason is not setting an example to a world, each atom of which has a set of reasons of his own, therefore, why should she not secure happiness for herself, at the risk of hurting nobody?

"CLOE."

ATALANTA CLUB.

Subject for June: "Are men or women most prone to idleness?" Papers must not exceed *two hundred and fifty words*, and must be sent in on or before June 25th. Prizes of five shillings will be awarded to each of the four best papers, which will be published in the body of the Magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

Give a humorous description of a church bazaar, in a small country town. Analyse the character of the Young Pretender. Write 20 original lines of ten-syllabic blank verse. Subject for the School of Journalism will be a leaderette of not more than 500 words on any current event that takes the writer's fancy. All papers must be sent in on or before June 25th. Essays must not exceed 500 words. Members may only enter for one of these subjects. Full rules for the above will be found among the advertising pages at the end of this number.

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (MAY).

I.

1. Sir Henry Wotton, Provost of Eton, died 1639.
2. *Earnest-money*, from the French "*Denier à Dieu*." At this day when application is made to the Dean and Chapter of Carlisle, to accept an exchange of the tenant under one of their leases, a piece of silver is presented by the new tenant, which is still called a "God's Penny."

II.

1. Beheading hill, the place of execution, in Scotland, was anciently an artificial hillock.
2. Dainties. 3. From "*Love Triumphant*," a tragic-comedy by John Dryden.

III.

1. *Inisfad*. 2. Fires lighted on the hill-tops, by the Irish, in honour of the sun.

IV.

1. A practice of great antiquity among the Circassian women, who tinged the hair and edges of their eye-lids with powder of lead-ore, named the Black Kohol, to give a long, dark languish to the eye.
2. The Christian Soldier, Montgomery.
3. The Rev. Thomas Taylor, who died suddenly.

V.

1. "In summer time" (Thomas, commonly called Tom D'urfey).
2. "Rivalry in Love" (William Walsh).

VI.

1. "Be hushed, ye bitter winds" (Henry Kirke White).
2. "The parent oak." Arnold.
3. W. Smyth. From Aikin's "Vocal Poetry."

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR JUNE.

I.

Give authors of quotations

1. "O balmy hours of silvery sheen and dew!
Shall nought behe you save this labouring breast?"
2. "Hush! hush! it is the charm of nothingness,
A sweet estate wherein there is no sweet;
A music true, though no vibrations beat,"
- "The golden foot-prints of departing Day
Are fading from the ocean silently,
And twilight, stealing onward, halves the sky."

II.

1. What is meant by the term "to pill and poll" in the line "Which polls and pills the poor in piteous wise;"
2. Explain what is meant by a "Curbed canon bit"?

III.

Give authors of quotations

1. "Why do we fret at the inconstancy
Of our frail hearts, which cannot always
love?"
2. "Weave o'er the world your web, ye weave
yourselves,
Imperial races weave the warp thereof."

IV.

And the following

1. "If thou wilt ease thy heart,
Of love and all its smart,
Then sleep, dear, sleep;"
2. "Where sunless rivers weep
Their waves unto the deep,
She sleeps a charmed sleep;
Awake her not."
3. "Sweet, thou has trod on a heart,
Pass! there's a world full of men,
And women as fair as thou art
Must do such such things now and then."

V.

1. What legend is attached to the term "*The Blacksmith's Apron*"?
2. What is a "Zel"?

VI.

Find these quotations

1. "Tears, though they're here below the sinners'
brine,
Above, they are the Angels' spiced wine."
2. "If little labour, little are our gains;
Man's fortunes are according to his pains."



H EART-LESS.

One day I gave my heart away—
It is too true, alack!—
I gave my heart away one day,
And never got it back.

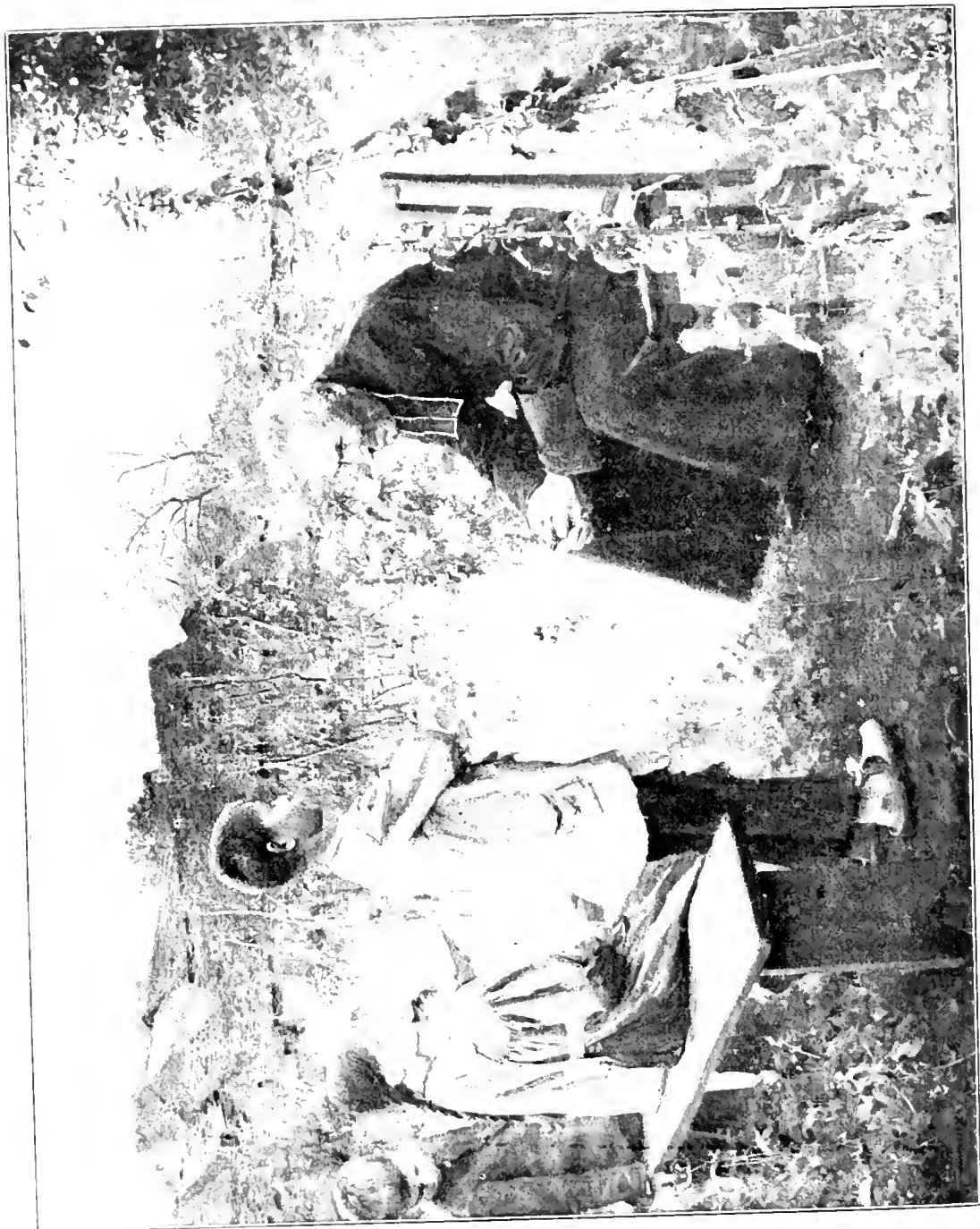
One Summer's day I met my dear,
Unlucky day for me!
I thought that I had nought to fear,
For he was fair to see.

He kissed my cheek, my lips, my brow,
He swore he loved me true,
I gave him all my heart, and now
Whatever shall I do?

He said, "Good-bye, for we must part,"—
Ah, that he false should be!
Away with him he took my heart
And nothing gave to me!

He sailed away across the sea
And left me all alone,
Had he but left his heart with me
Then I a heart might own!

M. H. W.



By Macnair

THE CATECHISM.

Turner's Gallery

SWEETHEARTS AND FRIENDS.

CHAPTER VII.

Viola "I'll do my best
To woo your lady—yet a barful strife.
Whoe'er I woo, myself would be his wife."

Twelfth Night.

THE presence of a child among the invalid boarders at Dole' Acqua was not unattended with inconvenience. Angela's following, consisting of Perpetua, who systematically spoilt her and was ready to wage war with the universe on her behalf, and of Nep, who glared with fiery eyes and gaping jaws upon anyone who appeared to molest his little mistress, were not altogether welcome additions to the household. A few days of rain which kept the invalids close to the house, and prevented the child and dog from playing in the garden, further complicated matters, so that what with keeping Angela from annoying the invalids and soothing her nightly grief at the non-appearance of her father, and preserving the peace between Perpetua and the household, besides seeing that Nep was fed and kept from mischief, Amy was somewhat burdened.

"Really, Amy," said Lettice, one pouring wet afternoon, as she strolled into the dining-room, "platonic friendship is a fine thing. I wonder if Mr. Lester is as much obliged to you as he ought to be for the trouble you take with his pets."

Perpetua sat by the hearth in great good humour. She had been telling anecdotes of Angela's family, of Angela herself, and of Nep, who were playing at ball. The game was to keep it passing from hand to hand. Amy threw the ball, Angela missed the catch with a shriek of joy, the dog caught it with short barks of delight. Perpetua, a handsome peasant woman of forty, looked on with gleaming teeth and sparkling eyes.

"I like children and dogs," replied Amy. "Ball is great fun on a wet day. Come and try, Letty."

"Thanks," replied Lettice, shrugging her shoulders, and drawing a chair to the hearth. "I am afraid of that great dog. I wonder when Mr. Lester means to send that spoilt child to school. Perhaps he is looking for a school in England for her. Amy, why are you so mysterious about this journey of his? You know all about it, of course."

"Oh, yes," she replied, coming to the fire with Angela, who climbed on her lap, "I know."

"But you don't mean to tell. Well, I think you might tell me in confidence. Take care, Amy, these moonlight wanderings are dangerous."

"Are they?"

"Colds are not the worst results. Amy, I really think you believe in that man with his perfections and his pretended friendship."

"Possibly. Don't you?" Did Lettice really dislike him, or were these sharp sayings only jealousy?

"Oh, he is well enough," replied Lettice, impatiently pushing a piece of wood into the flame with her foot. "But men are never to be trusted. He is a flirt: one of the worst kind. He blinds you with his solemn talk about dry things, which he knows is the right way to your heart. He is not like others who have one manner for all. Oh, yes, Amy, he is enjoying a fine flirtation with you without compromising himself. If I were you, I would put an end to it. He looks so desperately good and solemn all the time. And yet in the midst of this fine talk with you he will suddenly turn and look at me: such a look! At first, before I discovered what a thorough flirt he was, I used to believe in those looks. I actually laughed one day, and wrote to Carrie that I had never seen a man so hopelessly and ridiculously smitten before. But he need not think to throw dust in my eyes. I am too well used to that sort of thing."

"Which, Letty? Being deceived or being made love to?"

"Not being deceived, certainly. You know so little of life, dear. Stewed up with your

books, you have never felt what it is like to walk into a ball-room and see all the men surrender at once. You know that garrison dance last May I was telling you about? It was my first big dance. There was a huge fellow with a beard by the door who went dead white at the first glance. My card was full before he could get an introduction. You should have seen his face! He stood against the wall and eyed me all the evening; he made a dash at me at supper time, and took me down. He proposed in the hall. Three engagements were broken off on account of me that night, and the young Wellmans, who had then been married about two months, have not been friendly since. It almost frightened me when I saw five big men standing round me and all declaring that I was engaged to dance with them at once. They were telling lies, of course. I chose the one I liked best, and just as we were starting the waltz, up came the right man with a face like thunder, and showed his card. I promised to divide the dance between them. One man turned crimson whenever I looked at him, another stammered when he spoke to me. Oh, it was fine!"

"Really, Letty, I don't think you need accuse other people of flirting."

"Flirting! My dear, I didn't flirt! what chance had I? I simply came into the room and looked like—who was it, either the Duke of Wellington or somebody in the Bible?—who came and saw and conquered. Not that I disliked it. What girl could? Not even you, with all your learning. Wait till you have tried, and you might make a sensation in a room, if you took pains to make the most of yourself, and took care not to open your lips and betray your cleverness and learning. See if it doesn't get into your head like champagne."

"My poor little Letty! This is a very dangerous kind of champagne."

"Stuff! You know nothing of the world, Amy; you are much more likely to get your wings singed than I am. By the way, people here have made a pretty good guess at the

object of Mr. Lester's journey, and if they are right, you are not so simple as I thought."

"Well," replied Amy, taking the restless Angela once more on her knee and displaying a picture-book to her gaze, "what do people imagine the object of Mr. Lester's visit to be? To be present at the Disabilities of Women Debate?"

"Viviano mio," murmured Angela, catching her friend's name among the waste of hard English words that were so unintelligible to her, and lifting her liquid, lustrous Italian eyes from the picture-book to Amy's face with an eager, beseeching look. "He is coming back to-night? Yes, Amy?"

"Figliuola mia, not to-night, next week."

"When is next week? It is never next week," murmured the child.

"To be present at the debate? Naturally that was part of it. Ah! that was a fine stroke on the part of our Viviano, as Angela calls him. He knows the way to your heart, dear. The delicacy of the stroke! Fancy that humbug standing up before them all, the story teller, and declaring that he had come to vote against the Bill for removing Disabilities, but that what he had heard in the honourable member for Slowcombe's speech had induced him to support it."

"So you read Mr. Lester's speech. I thought, Letty, you never looked at newspapers, much less debates."

"Neither did I; I only listened to Mr. Browne, who was talking to Louisa about it. 'Ah,' Mr. Browne said, 'I know what self-deceivers we are, at least the masculine portion of us, and I could not help thinking that had our friend, the member for Dalesby, more strictly analysed his reasons for changing his opinion about Female Disabilities, he would have been obliged to confess that the society of a charming and very learned lady in the Riviera had a great deal to do with it. I assure you, Miss Stanley,' he added, 'that no one at Col Aprico would be surprised at receiving interesting intelligence about a certain lady doctor and a certain honourable member.'"

"Mr. Browne said that!" cried Amy, flushing. "Miserable old gossip! hateful old donkey! Let him go about in petticoats and take to working cross-stitch! The chaplain is the faithful reflection of the gossip of the community," she added, making sparks fly from logs on the hearth.

"Just so, dear child. Can you wonder now that people suppose Mr. Lester's visit to have reference to matrimony?"

"Stuff! By the way, Lettice, what did Mr. Browne think of Mr. Lester's speech?"

"Whose? Oh, Bayard's, of course. He said it was very good; he admires his speaking. What was it he said? Oh, I know, 'his ready eloquence often makes us forget his want of logic,' that was it."

"Mr. Browne is right; he is not logical, he is eloquent. His imagination is stronger than his reason."

"Now confess, Amy," continued Lettice, "the object of his visit is matrimonial. Aha, Dr. Amy! we know all about the olive-yard, where two people were seen sitting on a bench in the moon-light, who knows for how long? I wonder what kind of conversation is likely to be held under olive trees in moon-light?"

"It depends on who the people are. Who saw us?" asked Amy, reddening.

"Oh, my dear, these little things are not so easily hidden from the vulgar gaze as you think. Somebody saw."

Amy was tired of Lettice's perpetual teasing about the Immaculate, besides, a dim suspicion had lately been increasing within her that Lettice did not care for him, so she thought she would end the teasing and decide her doubt at once.

"Well!" she said, "then I had better tell you, in strict confidence. Mr. Lester does contemplate marriage, and is gone to England on that account."

"Ah!" cried Lettice, turning pale, and stooping to adjust the burning wood, "this, then, is the meaning of platonic friendship! Well, Amy, you might have been more open. So it is to end in this way, after all. Oh,

how false! What a flirt! What a humbug! Of course your people will consent; they'll jump at him, and you will be married like other people, just—just as if you had never been a doctor. Carrying off such a catch, too!"

"I?" returned Amy, almost regretting her words when she saw Lettice's discomposure, "I am not going to be married. I was speaking of Mr. Lester. But keep my secret, Letty. I told you in strictest confidence, remember."

"He is not engaged to you?" exclaimed Lettice, turning from pale to red, "and yet he thinks of marrying?"

"This is a secret, remember. Not a soul knows. How foolish I was to tell you."

"Who is the girl, dear? Tell me, oh, do tell me, there's a darling!" cried Lettice, hiding her face in Amy's dress. "I know I am horrid to you. I worry you to death, but I promise you to be so nice if you will only tell me. Is it—Louisa? Is it that horrid Lottchen Romer?"

"My little Letty, I can't tell you; I'm sworn to secrecy."

"Oh! you must, you must, you shall!" cried Lettice, passionately, her face still buried. "Is she pretty?"

"H'm, yes. Everybody says so."

"I don't believe it; I am sure he has no taste. Oh! tell me, she has a great fortune, he wants money."

"She has little, if anything, I believe; besides, he does not want money."

"Oh, what a story! You always told me he was poor."

"So he is, poor for his position."

"A country gentleman of good family," murmured Lettice. "The county will visit her. She will go to Court. She will have a town house, no doubt. Well, if he is poor, it is not much of a marriage. You told me Crofton Hall is a ramshackle old house, and with very little land. When I marry, I shall marry into the peerage, and take care that there is money."

"I would, if I were you, Letty. While

you are about it, you may as well aim high. I hope you will marry a good man. If you love him, you will not care about his position or money."

Something like a sob came from the hidden golden head. "Tell me, Amy," she murmured, "is he much in love with her?"

"Over head and ears. Bewitched."

"It's a shame! She's a horrid thing, hideous and stupid. Some gaunt, grim, learned creature, with red hair and spectacles! I always thought him a fool, a prig, and a flirt. Now I know it. I hate the wretch!"

She raised her flushed face from her friend's shoulder, sprang up, stamped on the ground, and rushed out of the room, crying with all her might.

"At all events," mused Amy, as she stroked Angela's glossy curls, "she loves him as much as she can. They may be happy after all. He will see no fault in her. Poor Lettice! at least she loves him."

CHAPTER VIII.

"You are a thousand times a properer man

Than she a woman—

But, mistress, know yourself; down on your knees
And thank heaven, fasting, for a good man's love."

As You Like It.

"Egia la settimana prossima?" little Angela asked of Amy as usual when she went to her in the morning to say her prayers, "Amy, will it never be next week?"

"Next week at last. He will come to-day, carissima mia."

"Oggi, gran Dio! Oh! Amy, oggi. Will he come to breakfast? Oh, I shall die, I shall die!"

"Are you so glad to leave me? You know you will go back to the hotel when he comes."

"No, I won't. Viviano shall live with the Frau, or else you shall live with us and Nep. We will have macaroni for dinner every day. Amy, do you love him?"

"Picciolina mia. Come to breakfast."

The child was beside herself; she ate no breakfast; she fidgetted about till she knocked

against Lettice and dashed her cup out of her hand, sending the black, scalding coffee all over her new spring costume. This was too much for Lettice, what with the stinging hot coffee over her arm, and dark stains over her fresh, light dress; she turned with an angry cry and gave the child a sounding box on the ear. Angela stood for a moment, dizzy, half-stunned with the blow, which made Lettice's hand tingle; then, with a shrill scream, she sprang at her like a wild cat. Sister Avis pulled her off with considerable difficulty, and carried her out, kicking and struggling, into the verandah, where she laid her down on the cool pavement.

"That child is a perfect demon!" cried Lettice, crimson with rage and pain. "Look here!" Rolling up her sleeve, she showed a ring of little red indentations in the cream white arm. "She almost made her teeth meet."

"I wish she had," Grace replied hotly. "Venting your wicked temper on a poor little child!"

"Ach! That was not well done, my Lettchen," said the good Frau, looking at her favourite's arm and then at the frantic child on the ground. "Ze little was never beat yet, and Italian blood is warm." Lettice went away injured and in high dudgeon, in spite of some twinges of conscience, thinking to make it up to Angela with sweets and toys some day. The child screamed till she became rigid and black in the face. Sister Avis then picked her up, exhausted, and carried her out to look at the flowers and see the pigeons fed. There they met Amy, rather pale and with her hand tied up, Nep following her, his tail between his legs.

"The dog has bitten you?" cried Grace. She had heard Nep's growl when Angela was struck, and had seen Amy run out on the verandah and catch him by collar, as he was about to rush into the breakfast-room.

"I was obliged to beat him," Amy said. "I am the only person in the house who can master him."

"He would have killed Lettice," said Sister Avis, "he would have had her by the throat the next moment."

"Don't say anything. Fortunately Perpetua was not there."

The bite was not severe though the skin was broken; but the sisters thought it well to keep both dog and child out of Lettice's way for a time. They strolled up the hill path, carrying Angela by turns, while Nep slunk behind with an ominous red glare in his eyes and a confused sense of wrong in his canine brain, knowing that he had been beaten for trying to do his duty. Presently they came to a warm niche in the rocks, carpeted with violets and redolent of thyme; here they rested, Angela lying quiet on the ground, with the dog, also quiet, crouching beside her.

When Sister Avis looked at the deep sapphire sea in the bright morning sunshine, she no longer wanted to die; life seemed so lovely, so full of possibilities.

"How we shall miss the sea," she said. "It was mistaken kindness to bring me here. I shall have the fight to subdue my wordly affections all over again."

"Take your freedom, Grace; live a natural life. Leave what you have no vocation for."

"When you renounce your chosen vocation it will be time to think of it; not before," her sister replied, rising and taking the child again.

Little Angela soon forgot her injuries and her passion, but Nep slunk about with a trailing tail, red eyes and a beaten look, all day, avoided by the household, who heard that he had bitten Amy.

"I am glad I didn't see it," was Lettice's comment on the biting, "I should certainly have fainted."

It was growing chill in the afternoon, when several of the Dolc' Acqua family were sitting in the garden, with Angela playing near; Lettice was hovering about discontentedly, wanting to talk to Amy, who was reading, but restrained by fear of Angela and Nep, who were making a barrier to her. Presently

quick, light footsteps were heard approaching, the Immaculate himself appeared from round a corner hidden by shrubs, having come softly to surprise Angela, whom he had seen from a distance through a glass. But it was not easy to surprise her, she heard and recognised the step almost as soon as the dog, and flew to him with a cry of joy. He caught her up, kissed her, and was going to set her down again; but the small arms were too tightly clasped about his neck. "Angiolina mia, what is the matter?" he asked. The little girl was sobbing and crying, and clinging to him, while Nep whined, barked and sprang into the air in a manner that prevented the Immaculate from doing his proper *devoir* to the ladies present. De Rolleau said something about family joys and *l'art d'être père*. Lettice standing apart, contemplated this effusive meeting with profound scorn. "A nice family," she thought; "they both bite."

After all, the blameless knight was human, and to be human is to have moments of unreason. That is probably why M. de Lestare, ecstasically received by the child, the dog, and M. de Rolleau of Paris, was chilled and disappointed at evoking no display of enthusiasm from the Misses Marshall and Langton. Could he expect these ladies to throw themselves into his arms *en masse*?

"How are you? Had you a pleasant journey? What an age since you left. When did you leave England?" ought surely to content an ordinary mortal; but the Immaculate was not an ordinary mortal. He said and did all the proper things in the most proper manner, as soon as he was disembarrassed from Angela and had set her down with an injunction to go and play. But nearly all that day, the child was still clinging silently to him and Nep fawning at his feet.

"The white heather brought me good luck," he said presently, stopping in front of Amy, who was again absorbed in her book at the farthest end of the sheltered nook, not unobserved by Lettice, whose eyes shot a

green glitter in their direction, her mouth still scornfully set.

"Yes? I am very glad," she replied, looking up a moment, without so much as a kind smile, and again perusing the page in her hand.

Lettice, stayed against a tree a few paces off, looked away at the sun-lit sea, apparently quite unmoved by the return of the faultless knight; Fraulein Lottchen hoped he had executed all his commissions and amused himself highly without spoiling his health. He answered at random, annihilated by the fact that Lettice did not care what he had done in his absence. Fraulein Anna's stockings were exceedingly civil and hospitable; he had paid considerable duty at the Custom House for bringing over the Langton's; he had discovered the Frenchman's neckties in a hotel at Paris, and dined with them. Mr. Steven Langton was among his luggage at the Montone d'Oro. Yes, he had delivered all the letters and posted the messages. The Cecil Langtons were most expensive; their little daughters much overweight."

"We all read your speech on Female Disabilities, Mr. Lester," Louisa said kindly, "even Lettice read that."

"Ah," his face lighted up at last, as he flashed a glance at Lettice, who was an embodiment of immovable indifference.

"And so you changed your mind?" continued Louisa. "We have hopes that you may yet become reasonable on the Woman question. Won't you come in? You will find Frau von Stein at home; she will be so glad to hear that her calicoes have arrived."

"Such a pity to go in yet; just as the sun is setting. Miss Marshall, I have many messages and parcels for you. I have been seeing your people."

He had turned and approached her with a diffident air, as he spoke, looking as beautiful and as melancholy as a strayed angel, and quite as good.

"Flirt!" Lettice thought. "Thank you,"

she said, "I had a letter from home this morning"; which was an invention.

Then Angela spoke for the first time, as her guardian gently disengaged her arms for the third or fourth time. "You will never, never go away again, Carissimo mio?"

"Why, why, what about the lovely big doll I was to bring?" he returned.

"I don't want dolls, I want you," she replied, lifting her large, dark eyes to his face and smiling. Then they told him of her excitement at the prospect of his return, and her daily longings and enquiries for him, while she prattled on in her liquid Italian, her arms outspread, her sweet flower-face uplifted. The Immaculate's heart was not of stone; he was obliged to catch the tiny creature up and embrace her. "You shall never leave me, my pretty bird, never. There, there! Now run and play. Are all little girls like this?" he asked in English.

"Not all," Louisa said impressively.

"Certainly not," Lettice interjected, "this is an unusually savage specimen. She bites."

"Bites?" he echoed, glancing at Amy's hand. "Surely she did not bite you, Miss Amy?"

"No, Angela bit me, your other pet bit Amy," Lettice returned.

"Oh!—Miss Marshall! Surely, surely not! Oh, I hope she did not really hurt you."

"It was nothing. Just a red ring on my arm. There is no danger. A dog's bite is worse," she replied, while Angela began to cry bitterly.

"Poor old Nep, of course he must be killed," said his master; "but Angela! *she* bit *you*?"

"What a shame to tell on the child!" cried Fraulein Anna, "at least tell all the history, Lettchen."

"Oh, I didn't mind the bite and I must confess that I boxed her ears," answered Lettice, laughing. "Don't punish her, Mr. Lester, please, please."

The Immaculate looked grave, as who

would not. "The dog must at all events be killed," he said, while the great generous creature leapt round him and fawned.

"Indeed he shall not," cried Amy. "Poor dog, he only did his duty."

"In biting you, my propheticess?"

"Certainly. He saw Angela struck; he rushed to help her; I pulled him back. He naturally bit me. Then I had to beat him. Poor, dear, old Nep!"

"But I can't keep a dog that bites."

"Give me the dog then?" Amy said. "He shan't be killed."

"Come Angela," Louisa said, "where are the flowers you were going to give Mr. Lester? Fräulein Anna, we poor wretches must go in out of the chill."

In the general move, Lettice, singing softly in very bad German, "*Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten*," moved languidly in the opposite direction to that taken by the others, through an alley shaded by a now leafless *fergola*. The Immaculate, torn by conflicting emotions, and still looking as beautiful as the day, remained rooted to the ground, half-way between the battalion going homeward and the slight figure moving through the alley. Angela was too much bent on gathering flowers for the Immaculate to observe his absence; she danced joyously on, singing and stooping to pick carnations, until it began to grow dark and she found herself back at the house. Then, discovering his absence she began to cry piteously, whereupon the dog sympathised by opening his jaws in a long-drawn howl of inconceivable melancholy, that alarmed the house.

Alas! poor faultless knight, left in the meanwhile gazing distractedly after the fair damsel, disappearing in the dusk of the alley! He rumbled his hair,—with the utmost grace; he smote his breast—with elegance; he wished he had never been born—but in the most decorous manner, without any swear-words or unbecoming gestures. What had he done to offend her? Then, as became a gallant knight, he resolved to do his devoir even though it slew him, and cast himself

prostrate at the feet of his lady, avowing his devotion in the nicest words to be found in the dictionary.

"Ich glaube die Wellen verschlingen," sang Lettice of the golden locks, pacing the slow time of the melody with fairy steps, as she issued from the dusk alley into bright sunset glow on a green slope, shadowed by murmuring pines. Just then she turned with slow nonchalance to face the agitated knight pursuing her swiftly through the alley.

CHAPTER IX.

The lunatic, the lover, and the poet.
Are of imagination all compact:—
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold—
That is the madman, the lover all as frantic,
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt.

"You are not glad?" Lester asked Amy, while Frau von Stein exhausted her enthusiasm in embracing Lettice and congratulating her in a curious and excited mingling of English and German.

"I am glad," she replied.

"You don't seem glad," he added with a wistful look.

She laughed a forced laugh. "I am a true Briton, and give my thoughts no tongue. Besides it is no surprise to me, and I have not just won a bright and beauteous bride."

"Do you wish us joy?"

"With all my heart."

The Immaculate was chilled. He could not be perfectly happy without sympathy. None but Amy Langton could properly share his feelings. Why had she turned to ice? Poor dear perfect knight! Angela had sprung into his arms, she pressed the flowers she had gathered for him against his face, chatting away in her musical Italian, like a little bird. He clasped her closer and kissed her tenderly. Here was sympathy at last. And who should rejoice if not this motherless child, about to know a second mother? It was then that the enthusiastic Frau, having set Lettice free, descended like a benevolent avalanche upon the Immaculate, folding him and the child in her extensive embrace, and

half-stifling him. Being engaged is not all joy, not all moonlight strolls, poetic raptures, soft whispers beneath lemon-scented blossoms, he discovered. Hapless knight!

"Ach! my good Herr Lestare, I enjoy me so," she cried in the English used for the benefit of Lettice, "zat my Lettchen should be your bride! you her bridegroom! No; zat is too beautiful! I congratulate tousand, tousand, time. And my linen zat you have brought with, and ze needles; would to Heaven zat I had also let bring ze post bedstead! And you shall be married together soon, yes? And I must have you for supper to-night. No, you shall not dream of going back to ze hot-hell to eat. It is your betrothal, your Braut-nacht. We will drink Hochheimer and push glasses. Yes? And ze little, ze Angela, she will have a mutter now. Ach! my little, you shall have cakes. Ze supper is brought up. Come in."

The unresisting "bridegroom" and "bride" were accordingly led, one in each of the Frau's kind hands, into the dining-room, where her family were already gathered for the evening meal.

"My ladies and gentlemen," said Frau von Stein with a beaming face, to the horror of the Immaculate. "Permit that I introduce you to Herr Vivian Lestare and Fraulein Lettice Marshall, betrothed."

Then it was that Lester found his devotion to the fair creature by his side put to a severe test. All the ladies precipitated themselves *en masse* upon poor little blushing Lettice, and overwhelmed her with kisses and congratulations; the men shook hands with her, and wished her joy; the ladies also shook hands with the bridegroom, wishing him joy. But von Wilden, without the slightest warning, clasped him in a fraternal embrace and kissed him on both cheeks.

The Immaculate did not swoon, neither did he swear. But the native Briton rose in revolt within him. He blushed deeply and darkly, but kept his dignity. "Don't be such an ass, von Wilden," he grumbled, with

indignation not loud but deep, freeing himself from the friendly German's arms, only to fall into those of de Rollean, whose ignorance of English made Lester's remark unintelligible to him, and who therefore kissed him with effusion, to the immeasurable delight and amusement of his compatriots.

Hapless knight! But one glance at sweet, blushing Lettice atoned for the Franco-German caresses; he accepted the calmer congratulations of the Swede and the Dane, men whom he knew but slightly, with proper gravity and resignation.

O wert thou in the cauld blast,
On yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry airt,
I'd shelter thee.

And what are storm, misery, death, in comparison with being publicly kissed by a von Wilden and a de Rollean?

But at last they went to table, and sat like ordinary, civilised, hungry humanity, until the hock went round, when the whole company again lost their reason, rose *en masse*, surrounding the Brautpaar, and clinked glasses excitedly against those of the newly-betrothed with fine disregard of consequences.

"What on earth will they do next?" the Immaculate wondered, meekly removing the spilt wine from his clothes with a serviette. The next thing was for von Wilden to spring upon his chair and begin to sing, "Wohl auf! nun getrunken den funkelnden Wein," in which they all joined in parts. Lester looked at the exquisite face at his side, more lovely than ever in its smiles and blushes, and when she lifted her clear grey eyes, smiling at him as if they two were alone together, the old glamour descended upon him, he forgot the whole world. But, alas! not for long.

Fraulein Anna wished to know if Herr Lestare had hunted the fox and eaten anything besides beefsteaks during his English visit. He had not shot the fox, but had had a splendid run of fifty minutes. He could not tell if the fox had been finally killed; having been cannoned into a brook, he was not in at the death. "Fifty minutes to catch one

leettel fox! Du meine Gute! And such a fall! Herr Lester would hunt no more? Ach Himmel! these mad English. They have only two amusements; one for fine days, when they say 'We will kill something'; one for bad days, when they say 'We will kill ourselves.' In fast trains, on jumping horses, steeple-hunts, and the boxe. Then when the November fogs come they all hang themselves."

"It is well arranged," de Rolleau said, stroking his beautiful waxed moustache, "Without this passion for killing themselves, how would the English keep down their overflowing population? The Frenchman, on the contrary, a rarer, nobler being, chooses amusements that preserve life.

"That was well said, my friend," added von Wilden, "everything in Nature evolves from itself what it needs for the purpose of sustaining individual and generic existence. Thus the Englishman, finding in himself a tendency to increase in number beyond the capacity of his foggy island to feed him, evolves an instinct of self-destruction; while the Frenchman, fearing lest he should, as is very probable, ultimately become extinct, preserves his own life with the greatest care and develops a tendency to destroy the natural as well as the individual life of others. But will this struggle for existence be crowned with success? Science informs us that such struggles result in the survival of the fittest."

"Ha!" cried de Rolleau, with difficulty following von Wilden's labyrinthine and nasal French, "You will insult France, von Wilden? And I present? I ask the ladies' pardon."

"Ach! you are making mistakes again, my children," cried Frau von Stein. "M. de Rolleau knows that Herr von Wilden regards France as the foremost nation in the universe. Yes? Herr von Wilden?" M. de Rolleau's moustache bristled, his eyes glittered.

"Pardon, de Rolleau; I regard France as the first nation in the world," replied von

Wilden in French, "in vanity," he added in his native tongue, understood by the majority of the party, but not by the Frenchman, who had mastered no language but his own, obviously the only one worth mastering.

De Rolleau bowed, smiled, twisted his spiky moustache, and said that he cherished an unalterable friendship for M. de Wilden. Von Wilden replied that M. de Rolleau enjoyed his highest esteem.

"Vanity," he added "is a property inherent to the stupid; its object is to prevent them being crushed by the consciousness of their inferiority and to rouse their aggressiveness against those who despise them. It is like the thorns upon certain plants in an early stage of growth, which serve to defend them from the attacks of browsing cattle."

"Très bien! très bien!" said de Rolleau, smiling. "M. de Wilden speaks always in philosopher."

There was mischief in von Wilden's eye, the gleam of battle in de Rolleau's; the Swede and the Dane began to put in their oars.

"Come," cried the good hostess, "we will see what our good Herr Lestare has brought us from England. Men have brought the things."

The vestibule was piled with parcels; two hot men with trucks stood wiping their faces at the door. The ladies hailed their parcels with loud and voluble delight, de Rolleau was affected to tears by the sight of his Parisian neckties. Ah! why was Paris so cold in winter? mused the exile from the only habitable spot on earth. Von Wilden was very critical over his books and very exact in paying for them; when the Immaculate said "Hang the odd shillings!" he thought what a pity it was not to let this rich Englishman pay the whole score.

"What is the matter with you? We seem to be strangers all at once," the Immaculate asked Amy, whose reception of a Parisian trinket he brought her as a souvenir had been somewhat chilling. "You reject this wretched thing with scorn?"

"Not scorn."

"In short you reject it. Very well!"

Then to Amy's surprise, the courteous and chivalrous Lester dashed the morocco case to the ground, and turned angrily away.

"I wonder why on earth I am such a fool," she mused. "Is it because I have made the Immaculate Mr. Lester angry?" The vestibule was now empty, she sat alone under the swinging lamp on the stairs and looked at the jeweller's case, which had sprung open and shot the bracelet out upon the pavement, where it glittered in the lamp-light. She could not bear to see it there, ready to be trampled on by the first passer; yet she had not the resolution to pick it up.

"I would not have it because I care too much for him," she thought, "and it is best so. I am glad he was angry. He ought not to have been angry; it was unkind. I wish I had taken it quietly. I am glad I didn't; I am glad he brought it. It was most impertinent of him. Sometimes I think I hate him. We always differed and disagreed, and now we have come to the hating point. No doubt I hate him, therefore I dislike to meet him, and therefore I will never meet him again. He does not hate me; he only disapproves of me. As if it mattered."

Did Lettice really care for Lester? How lovely beyond her lovely wont she looked that night with the flush of happiness and bashful tenderness upon her.

"Ah! great and glorious power of beauty!" Amy thought, quite unconscious of her own, and almost envious of Lettice Marshall's. "Still, if only she loves him. I think Letty loves him."

So Frau von Stein and her pensionnaires thought, when they observed the blushing and sparkling of the pretty face that fascinated them all. A beautiful poetic marriage, all love on both sides, all except the Dane, who was smitten himself, thought, with quiet elation. This betrothal was the most delightful, cheering thing that had ever happened at Villa Dole' Acqua; it brought

an atmosphere of love and romance, youth and poetry, into the limited, stagnant, invalid circle.

Something more than a conviction that she was going to make a suitable match, and an exultant feeling that she was leading captive a man who, in position, mind, and person, was all that a girl could desire, inspired Lettice. She really loved this man, though she loved herself better. Of the first clause Lester was assured, of the possibility of the latter he could not dream. Lettice was to him a celestial vision, a flawless being; she was indeed not Lettice at all, but an impossible creation of his own imagination.

This dreamer walked home in his dream beneath the stars, listening to the hushed song of the unseen sea, and the faint whisper of the night wind among boughs of myrtle and lemon, with a look of supernatural exaltation on his face. He had not gone far when he turned and looked back. Lights were not out at Villa Dole' Acqua. That was Lettice's window. Perhaps she was at her evening devotions,—overpowering thought! How dare he be present even in imagination at that holy rite? Yet she was probably praying for him, unworthy him! Sweet, sweet Lettice, pure pearl of stainless womanhood! And he dared to raise his thoughts to that height, nay, more, he had actually been accepted there. She had stooped to him, even him! The light went out. The golden head now pressed the pillow. "Happy slumber, rosy visions, sweetest and purest!"

He turned homewards thinking of the evening's comedy, while striking a light for his cigar. Von Wilden had excelled himself on the piano after supper. Then there were *tableaux vivants*. Once, happily seated by Lettice, Lester glanced across the room. There sat Amy Langton, looking very pale and tired, her hand bandaged, the dog's head on her knee. He had forgotten the bite; he did not even know if it were serious. The picture was distressing, a jarring chord. But Lettice

spoke, it was forgotten in a moment. Now it rose again to be again dismissed in the exquisite tumult that blonde vision evoked.

His face was exalted and spiritualised, his eyes brilliant; he was like an enchanted hero of old romance, seeing visions unutterable. He might wake at any moment from the magic trance; but he could never escape the fate to which he had bound himself while under the spell.

Lettice was considering her wedding clothes, and how many bridesmaids she would have, and what they would wear.

"Die Wahn is kurz, die Reu ist lang."

CHAPTER X.

"Wenn du sie im Zorn ertappen konntest, da wäre sie am besten kennen zu lernen; da springt der versteckte inwendige Mensch heraus—"

"Barfussele."

Next morning, the Immaculate took Angela and the dog to Villa Dole'Acqua; the child on the way chattered as much as usual, but received fewer replies. Her guardian was thinking of other things; he was no longer so much pleased and amused by her pretty ways and caresses; he was beginning to think children on the whole rather a nuisance. Some dim suspicion of this was quickly manifest to Angela's observant mind. Receiving no answer to a five times repeated question, she looked in her guardian's face with the dumb pathos of a beaten dog and sighed dejectedly, relapsing into spiritless silence. Could this be her Viviano, or had some wicked witch conjured his soul out of his body?—an event of probable daily occurrence. Was Frau von Stein a witch? Perpetua said she was a heretic, a heretic was probably as bad as a witch. What was the good of asking Viviano when his soul was gone away? She clasped the big doll from England closer, kissed a little more paint off her cheeks, and asked her instead, producing no change in the glassy stare and fixed red smile.

They met Frau von Stein coming from her

poultry-yard with some eggs in her apron and a large straw hat over her morning cap.

"Frau," asked Angela solemnly, "Is a heretic a witch? Are you a witch?"

"Du lieber Himmel! no; that is the witch," she cried, laughing and pointing to Lettice, who was innocent of any language but her own, and some wild fragments of French.

"Has she stolen Viviano's soul?" she continued anxiously.

"Ha! ha! Herr Lester, do you hear ze little? She would make a wit, she would poke a fun at you!" cried the delighted Frau in English. "Yes," she added in Italian, "the witch, Lettchen, has stolen away his soul."

"There are no witches except in stories, Angela," Lester replied. "It is dangerous to jest with this child, Frau von Stein. She's so sharp."

"People don't know when they are bewitched," observed Angela, submitting to the caresses of von Wilden and the ladies on the verandah, and slipping quickly past Lettice, who called her to her side with a smile. She went unwillingly, almost fearfully, suffered Lettice to kiss her averted cheek, and wriggled quickly away.

"This is naughty, rude behaviour, Angela," her guardian said. "Go, carissima, and kiss the lady and say good-morning in your best English."

"I don't like her," moaned the child. "She beat me—hard."

"This is naughtier and naughtier. You know that you deserved it. Oh, yes, I heard all your naughtiness."

"Pardon, Herr Lestare, ze little tells true. Ach! Lettchen," she began, lapsing into German, "you know you struck first and hard; then she bit you," said Frau von Stein. "Our Lettchen has her quick blood, who is worth anything without that? The child danced and fell against her, and the hot coffee stained her dress and burnt her arm. And Lettchen, you swung your hand round hard, hard,—the dog saw and would have killed her, but our brave Amy caught him by the

throat. Then this naughty, naughty Angela became like a mad child and bit the lady."

"She struck hard," sobbed the child, gathering from this that her misdeed was referred to, and creeping up to her guardian to be comforted.

The Immaculate said nothing in any tongue, but he thought in three. Lettice had vented her anger upon a helpless child; she had misrepresented her violence to the child's detriment. Lettice was sitting smiling unconsciously by his side, looking like an angel. When she saw the change on his face, concluding that he was angry with Angela, some compunction made her draw the little girl towards her. But Lester suddenly snatched Angela away and set her on the other side of him.

"My Lettichen," said the good Frau in English, "ze little is scolded, while she did bite; please tell to our good Herr Lestare ze trute."

"Oh," said Lettice with her sweet smile, "don't scold the dear child, pray; it had better be forgotten. She was very naughty, I was a little sharp with her."

"Why did you strike her?" he asked in a tone that chilled her.

"Well, since you must know the whole history," she replied, "Angela was naughty—"

"Ach! not naughty, she did eat nozing for joy of Herr Lester's return," interrupted Frau von Stein, "she was agitate —"

"Well, she was frisking about and knocked a cup of scalding coffee over me. Before I knew what I was about I had given her a little slap on the side of her face—"

"Ach! my Lettichen, it was greater as you did sink. Her ear and cheek was red like blode; she did wank, she did stagger, and zen she did jump at you."

"Yes; then she sprang at me—I was so frightened—and nearly made her teeth meet in my arm."

"I am very sorry. I am more sorry than I can say. Is the wound healing?" he asked.

"Wound? Oh, the mark soon went," Lettice laughed.

"And the dog?"

"The dog? What did he do? Something dreadful, I believe; but I was too much occupied with this little fury to see," replied Lettice, laughing.

"Ze dogue?" said the good Frau. "Ach Gott! zat could have been tragic. When he see ze little beat, he spring out from ze verandah, with fire eyes and growls like sunder. Amy in one minute she has her hand on ze great black throat, zen zere is a fight—du meine Güte! a fight with maiden and dogue. Von Wilden, he is zere soon to help, but not until ze beast did bite ze maiden. Herr von Wilden blinded ze beast, and Miss Amy—I know not what she has done, but ze dogue is her servant."

"I am glad I didn't see it," added Lettice, with a shiver, "I should have fainted."

"The dog would have killed you," Lester said with emotion. "Poor little thing!" he added, in Italian. "If you are naughty, you must expect to be beaten, Angela."

"Father never, never beat me," whimpered Angela.

"Ach! das Waisekind. Herr Lester, never, never must you beat zis shild. It will have only kindness," commented Frau von Stein.

"Spare the rod and spoil the child," said Lettice, in her musical voice. "She is already ruined by over-indulgence."

"I love not your philosophy, Miss Marshall," remarked von Wilden, who had been sitting silently in the sunshine, with a philosophical German book, containing sentences two pages long, interminable mazes, with the verb at the very end. While enjoying this mental relaxation, he broke off occasionally to meditate upon the possibility of excluding the perception of space from the consciousness of infinity, and the probability of the on-the-point-of-being, or *werdende*, having no continuity of essence with the being, or *geworden*. While revolving these airy trifles, his solid Teutonic brain was further occupied with the study of humanity in the concrete, in the specimens before him on the verandah. "I do not hold," he continued, "that the young

human intelligence can be well developed by the principles of pain, terror, and disgrace, all of which degrade the consciousness and lower the dignity of humanity, and all of which should be reduced as much as possible to a minimum in the common consciousness of the race. Let us, therefore abolish punishment in the family and rear human beings uncontaminated by fear and pain, when we may safely abolish it in the State. How are beautiful forms and colours developed, and ugly or useless organs lost, in the natural and gradual process of evolution? The ugly and the useless dwindle by disuse and become extinct; the beautiful or useful—and these terms are often synonymous—on the contrary, develop themselves by constant use." Soaring into regions of impalpable science, he traced the development of a newt's foot into the human hand. "So," he continued, "we shall follow Nature in the artificial process of developing an ideal *Mensch* from the rudimentary being"—bestowing a prickly-bearded kiss upon the rose-leaf surface of Angela's cheek—"before us. We will cause her to lose, by disuse, fear and its accompanying degradation, and to develop to the utmost the opposite principle—love, and all the elevating virtues of humanity which spring from this one, so beautiful root." He maintained further that the civilisation of different periods could be ascertained by an enquiry into their views of a supreme ruling power, or powers. Was the great First Cause worshipped in terror, with propitiatory rites, as a willing inflictor of misery, then were the worshippers very low in the scale. Was the Supreme Ruler, on the contrary, revered and trusted as a beneficent Being, incapable of cruelty, then had the worshippers reached a high point.

Whereupon the Immaculate was bound to reply; the original subject of discussion became gradually lost sight of; literally playing at hide-and-seek behind the trees with Nep, metaphorically circling the globe. Lettice listened with her gentle air of appreciation, and laughed her musical laugh

occasionally, quite unconscious of what was being said in laboured English. She was wondering if satin would still be worn by brides in a year's time, when she was to be married. Von Wilden spoke English grammatically, with idioms borrowed from every language he knew, and they were numerous. He habitually addressed Lester as "young fellow" and "you rascal," under the impression that these terms were usual. He gave vigour to his conversation by such expressions as "zounds," "odd's my life," "Crikey." Again, he would address the Immaculate as "old cuss," or "old hoss;" but these expressions, picked up from a smart American youth, were not his favourites. If Lester ventured to hint that these terms were not heard in the best English, von Wilden, reflecting that the Immaculate was not noble, concluded that he was most likely unacquainted with the aristocratic use of language.

The sunshiny morning having slipped imperceptibly away, Lester, promising to appear at the evening's reception, took his leave. How different to yesterday's poetic exultation was to-day's dejection! The serpent appeared early in this Eden. Angela trotted happily along, telling her companion a long, unintelligible history, not entirely founded on fact, about Nep, Perpetua, Amy, and Sister Avis, when a cry and rush from the child, a bound and whine from the dog, heralded Amy Langton's appearance round a turn in the pillared drive on her way home.

"How is the hand?" the Immaculate asked. "Let me see it, pray. Are you quite sure that it is not serious?—have you had it cauterized?" he continued with profound solemnity.

She ungloved a pinky-white hand, the back torn in two or three places, already healing. The sight produced a dismal howl and drooping tail from Nep, who slunk away, looking like a limp roll of black fur, and crouched behind a pillar, showing nothing but the whites of his eyes.

"Thank God, it is no worse," exclaimed

Lester fervently. "How brave of you, Miss Amy! The dog might have killed her. Warm-hearted people are always warm-tempered," he continued, as he tied up the hand. "And I am afraid that she is not very fond of children."

"She is very young and not accustomed to children," replied Amy, rightly judging that "she" indicated Lettice.

Having placed Angela in Perpetua's hands, the Immaculate, being in sore need of solitude and time for meditation, set off quickly for a sail. But soon after he reached the shore, he heard a light patter of footsteps behind him, interrupted by a little gurgle of laughter, and turning, saw his small charge, clasping her doll and laughing roguishly. She was going for a row, too, she said, and, in spite of commands and remonstrances, the small despot of five summers had her will. The boat was soon gliding over the sea in the sunshine, Angela, the dog and the doll in the stern; the Immaculate, half amused and half angry, pulling long strokes, facing this curious and contented trio. The brightness and beauty, the refreshing breath of the salt breeze, the noble amphitheatre of hills retreating from the grand sweep of the bay, their bases covered with oleander, aloë, orange, lemon and myrtle trees, their higher slopes with olives, pines and oaks, their bare limestone tops, crowned with snow, piercing an azure sky, and the pleasantness of shooting the boat with strong strokes over the dancing wave, revived the Immaculate's drooping spirits. A British troopship, homeward bound, stood in the offing, her white hulk azure with reflected blue; English-built yachts sailed before the light wind; foreign coasting vessels, mostly with lateen sails, flitted along; sea-gulls hovered like living foam-flakes over the waves. The Immaculate shipped his sculls, hoisted a sail, lighted a pipe, and steered. Angela put a lead pencil into her own mouth and another into the dog's and they smoked too.

When the boat touched the shore, at sunset, the chocolate-box was empty and Angela

sadly indisposed. Lester, bearing a limp, dishevelled scrap of humanity back to the hotel in his arms, hoped sea-sickness was not very bad for children. Perpetua would probably scold him roundly for letting her go in the boat; but how about von Wilden's beautiful theories of freedom and kindness? Boating must be given up until Angela had evolved the quality of obedience. In the course of the afternoon, the doll having fallen overboard, Angela sprang after it, and was cunningly caught by Nep and held above water, while the Immaculate, petrified with fear, had brought the boat round and hauled the trio in, as best as he could, while encumbered with the sculls.

"What *am* I to do with the brat?" he asked of Frau von Stein in the evening.

"Ach! Gott, Herr Lestare, you must loaf her and be patient."

All black misgivings and wretched doubts vanished, all the old glamour fell upon him again, when he sat that evening by the side of the exquisite creature pledged to him, gazing in her beautiful eyes and hearing her occasional musical monosyllables. There was a new something in her manner that took the edge from the morning's apprehensions and intensified her charm, an innocent pleading, a tender reproach. He handed her coffee and cakes, admired the beautiful curves of her lips when they broke into soft smiles, the delicate tints of her cream and blush-rose face, the trembling of star-like jewels that he brought from Paris in her small polished ears.

Von Wilden touched the piano with unusual skill, gliding, as usual, into a Volkslied.

"Ach! wie ist's möglich dann,
Dass ich dich lassen kann,
Hab dich von Herzen lieb,
Dass glaube mir."

De Rolleau, touched by seeing the young couple, and hearing Von Wilden's love-laden music, thought of Paris, and dashed a tear of sensibility (of which he was intensely proud) from his dark eye. Consenting to sing to Von Wilden's accompaniment, he gracefully

approached the piano, negligently tossing his hair from his brow, and placing one hand with easy elegance upon his hip, he began in a nasal high voice to sing to an air of plaintive monotonous melancholy, "Ic-i has tous les hom-mes pleur-ent." with a pathos so profound that Nep, who had surreptitiously accompanied his master, lying outside the drawing-room door, and unable to suppress his emotion, burst into a prolonged and heart-rending howl, so dismal that it obliged several people to bury their faces in their handkerchiefs, Nep doubtless thinking that if all men wept, all dogs were privileged to do likewise. Not so De Rolleau, who abruptly stopping his lamentations, uttered a *Sacrè* with more r's in it than could be written down in five minutes, and left the room. Miss Ada P. Williss then brought out her banjo, and sang a plantation song with a burden of "Yah, yah, yah," succeeded by "Old folks at home." The piano was then occupied by one of those terrible social evils who play with "great execution." Her muscular exertion was enormous, her arms were laden with bangles that clanked like manacles, so that her listeners, especially the Germans, returned thanks when, with a final bang on half the keys at once, she rose. Von Wilden's eyes glared fiendishly, he muttered injurious observations in six languages. The pieces being attributed to Liszt, some English person murmured "Don't list," the meaning of which, after ten minutes' deep meditation, penetrated to Von Wilden's brain, and resulted in an explosion of laughter just as Frau von Stein was relating a pathetic anecdote of "mine blessed Mann."

Once more, in the quiet light of the eternal stars, a dreamer walked home in a dream. All the odorous air, blossoming earth, and hushed sea, were again replete with poetry, love and beauty. All lingering doubts and fears were effectually stilled by the touch of a talisman he carried, a parcel of seductive toys, a peace offering from Lettice to Angela, now asleep in her cot watched by Perpetua, who knitted by a shaded lamp, and told her

beads. Lester, his face full of reverent tenderness, looked long and silently at the rosy child, with her long, dark eye-lashes touching her velvety cheek, her dimpled arms flung carelessly abroad among her curls. Perpetua had hung a crucifix and a holy water vessel above the cot; she watched *Peretico* with jealous eyes, making the sign that wards off the evil eye. His lips moved, his hand was slightly raised, as if in benediction; he kissed the baby brow very softly and stole away.

Perpetua rose, sprinkled some drops of holy water over the sleeper, and made the sign of the cross.

[To be continued.]

DANISH MEMORIES.

BY LADY JEPHSON.

CHAPTER III.

No one should visit Copenhagen without going to the vegetable and fruit market, which lies near the Christiansborg Slot, on the opposite side of the canal. It bears, to English ears, the formidable name of Amagertov, but saving that drawback it is as singularly pretty and animated a scene as one could wish to find. The machicolated tower of St. Nicholas, under the shadow of which the market lies, is subtly reminiscent of Florence. Not so the market women, with their clean white kerchiefs pinned decently over their big round bonnets, their northern calm, not to say stolidity. The market stalls are primitive enough in all conscience, being, generally speaking, formed of boards laid on four barrels. Here are temptingly displayed masses of melons, apples, pears, plums, rows of cabbages, carrots, turnips, cucumbers, vegetable marrows, and egg-plants. Great part of the merchandise is to be seen spread out in



MORNING.

carts, the horses standing in rows, whilst the carts form *al fresco* shops. When we visited the Market Place, plants of every description and quantities of flowers were for sale, and the comely Danish women smiled encouragingly, or nodded pityingly at our abortive attempts to make ourselves understood. At the top of the Market Place stands a picturesque red-brick and gabled Dutch house, in which lived the famous Sigbrit, mother to Dyveke, Christian the II.'s favourite. Few romances in history surpass that of the low-born woman who began life as a huckster in Amsterdam, and rose to be the Prime Minister of a great king. Christian II., before he came to the throne, first saw the beautiful Dyveke at Bergen, where she was recognised as the loveliest woman in the town. She and her mother returned with him to Denmark, where Dyveke lived near the king even after his marriage with Charles V.'s sister, the daughter of Phillippe le bel of Austria. Dyveke seems to have been amiable and good according to her lights. When she

died young (from eating poisoned cherries, supposed to have been prepared by the Queen's confessor), Christian mourned her deeply.

Hvitfeldt tells us of Sigbrit's unpopularity with the people. The nobles pandered to her, the King and Queen trusted her, but the *oi polloi* would have none of her, and even once set upon and beat her. The luckless Christian (who seems to have had democratic tastes) took the side of the peasants against their masters, and thereby earned the hatred of the nobles. It was by order of this king that the famous and terrible Blood Bath of Stockholm came about in 1520, and the Stor Torg in that city will ever be associated with the tragic end of the Swedish nobles, who were beheaded there. After Christian's downfall, his uncle, Frederick I., imprisoned him in the Castle of Sonderburg, where he had time to repent his misdeeds during sixteen years' imprisonment. Round the table in the middle of the room, the stone pavement became in time worn deep by the unhappy captive's feet. The table, in course of years, showed a groove made by the daily pressure of the miserable king's thumb. When Frederick I. died Christian II. was released, and met with different and kind treatment from Christian III.

One of the famous sights of Copenhagen, the Thorwaldsen Museum, is close to the Amagertorv. It lies behind the Royal Chapel, and within the precincts of the Palace, and was erected by a grateful country to the memory of one of its most distinguished sons. Thorwaldsen died in Copenhagen the year of our Princess of Wales' birth, and he is buried in the midst of his works. The museum is built in the form of a mausoleum, and is frescoed outside with rather comical representations of the landing of Thorwaldsen's sculptures in Copenhagen. Time and weather have softened the crudities of colour, but nothing can efface the oddities of composition. In shape the museum is a hollow square, and

in the middle of the courtyard lies the great sculptor. A simple granite ledge encloses his grave, and over it ivy grows luxuriantly. The courtyard is paved with stone, and the lower part of the walls are painted black, and frescoed with palm trees and climbing conventional plants; whilst the upper portion is covered with prim Etruscan vases and horses and chariots. The whole idea is Egyptian, and quite in keeping throughout. Round the building runs a corridor, off which are innumerable cabinets containing Thorwaldsen's works, and there is also a vestibule full of colossal plaster casts. No one can be blind to the supreme genius which stamps Thorwaldsen's work. In his business dealings the great sculptor does not seem to have been so satisfactory—geniuses seldom are. His first order (the Jason) was from Mr. Hope, a Roman banker, who paid for it half the price in advance. For over twenty years Thorwaldsen kept him waiting for his Jason. Prince Bariatinsky much wished for a statue of his wife, and, like Mr. Hope, paid down one-half the sum of money agreed upon in advance. The sculpture was never delivered, was removed to Copenhagen, and eventually the Princess's son failed to recover it, and was obliged to content himself with a copy by Bissen. Thorwaldsen lived and worked in Rome, but from time to time he came back to his native country. The Danish Government paid him the greatest compliment ever perhaps paid to any artist, since they placed a frigate at his disposal to bring him and his treasures from Italy. One passes in the Thorwaldsen Museum through corridors and cabinets, meeting at every turn familiar friends. In the vestibule is the plaster model for Pius VII.'s monument, now in St. Peter's. Not far from it, in the corridor, is the Lion of Lucerne, then come the exquisite medallions "Night" and "Morning," the beautiful "Mercury ready to slay Argus," the almost equally beautiful "Shepherd-boy"—both done from a Roman lad caught by accident in the streets of Rome. Venus with the apple is here, and

Ganymede; endless busts and portrait statues and bas relief. (Did not the Italians call Thorwaldsen "*Il maestro dei bassi-rilievi*"?) Finally we leave the loves and trivial adventures of Olympian gods, and enter the solemn Hall of Christ. Christ stands facing the door, a masterly and glorious conception. On either hand are ranged the apostles, and immediately in front of the door which opens into the courtyard is the sculptor's favourite work—his kneeling angel. Thorwaldsen executed all these colossal figures in marble for the Vor Frue Kirke; but the church is so hideous a one, and the light so bad, that they are not seen to so much advantage there as in the museum, albeit in the latter they are but plaster casts. A surfeit of galleries is like a surfeit of pastry—one cannot take to excess of either without a feeling of nausea. We found, therefore, that our afternoon's drive to Bernstorff to write our names in the Princess of Wales' book was a very pleasant alternative. The suburbs of Copenhagen reach now almost to the Château, and are neither beautiful nor



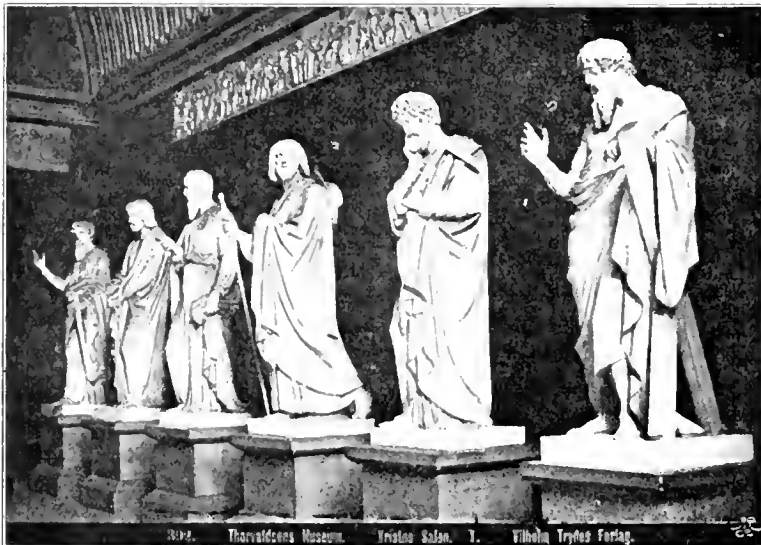
NIGHT.

picturesque. A gasometer is a prominent object on the road; "lyst-gartens," restaurants, and cafés abound, and it is not till we near Charlottenlund that we come to really pretty scenery. Then how charming are the blue waters of the Sound, sparkling in the sunshine, and how alluring the country houses with their shrubberies and avenues, clipped hedges, verandahs, lawns, and here and there futile attempts at statuary, and moss-grown sun-dials or fountains. Charlottenlund, the Crown Prince's country home, is a white-washed, comfortable-looking, unpretentious house. About it lie dense woods, much beloved by Danish 'Arries and 'Arriets, and where they spend their Sunday afternoons dancing and pic-nicking under the trees. The road from Charlottenlund to Bernstorff is under a magnificent avenue of limes—pollarded, of course, as all the trees are in Denmark. Four yellow-washed pillars and iron gates, flanked on either hand by one-storied lodges, mark the entrance to Bernstorff. Inside one enters immediately a beautiful woodland, and under the shade of really glorious trees approaches the Château. The view from the flight of steps at the hall

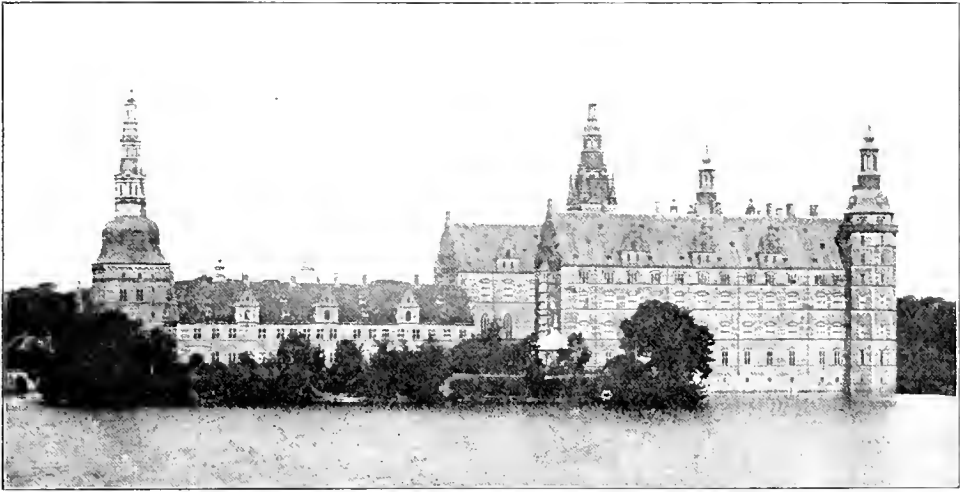
door is sylvan and pretty, the Château looks most comfortable, and is certainly not unpicturesque. I was told that Bernstorff was much beloved by the princes and princesses of the Danish Royal Family, being full of happy memories of childhood. In architecture the Château is rather French, with steep-pitched roof, dormer windows, and a curious *tourelle*, above which float the Danish national colours. Driving back, we met carts full of tidy-looking market women, nearly all of them wearing dainty embroidered muslin kerchiefs over their black silk bonnets. We were also amused to see how cows are coddled in Denmark, and how comical they look wrapped in blankets as they graze. In Copenhagen one shop is very often conveniently placed over another: as, for instance, a buyer would go down several steps into a cellar for his ironmongery, and then, on regaining the pavement, he mounts a small flight of steps into a light, airy shop above for his bread. The street signs are original and quaint enough. A baker's is always a twist surmounted by a crown. The best shops are to be found in the Østergade.

CHAPTER IV.

It would be hard to find a more exquisite or fairy-like Castle than Fredricksborg. Built on three islands it rises to all appearances out of the lake, at parts there being no visible foundation. All gables and turrets and pinnacles like Rosenborg, it is yet a far grander, statelier building. In size it is immense, in tone all that is beautiful, in architecture supremely lovely, in situation



PART OF THE HALL OF CHRIST.



FREDRICKSBORG CASTLE.

strikingly uncommon and picturesque. To reach it one goes by train to Hillerød Station, whence a short drive brings the traveller to the quaint little town which lies about the Castle-gates. The whole effect of Fredriksborg with its noble gateways and court-yards, its double moat, and graceful towers and spires is extraordinarily beautiful. Of course, like most noble Danish buildings, it dates from the reign of Christian the Fourth. Originally Frederick II. built a Castle here, and built it well, but his father's inception was much enlarged and beautified by Christian. Frederick II., he it remembered, was the father of Anne of Denmark; and Sophia of Mecklenburg, an excellent and handsome woman, was his wife. On the walls which remain of Frederick's building one sees Sophia's noble and pious motto recorded: "*Meine Hoffnung zu Gott allein.*" The Renaissance gateway is richly sculptured with armorial bearings, which I discovered to be those of Christian the Fourth and his Queen. The court-yard has grim traditions of an execution carried out here by no less a person than the King. Hare, in his Scandinavian sketches, and Marryat, in his "Residence in Jutland," relate that Christian, who looked well to the

ways of his household, convicted his master of the Mint of peculations, whereupon, says Marryat, he "ordered out the culprit into the court-yard of the Castle, and there on an improvised block of stone chopped off his head with his own royal hand." "Our Mint-master would have cheated us, said he, but we have cheated him, for we have cut his head off."

Entering the Castle we passed through a long corridor with vaulted chambers opening off it. On the corridor walls hang a series of modern paintings on cloth in imitation of tapestry. They all have for burden of their song Danish victories, and we rose to the occasion when we saw a picture of water and ships, underneath which was the inscription: "Knud's Seilands til England." Then came "Knud (Canute) and Emma," and "Knud store faster Dronning Emma til Sin Vin." "Knud" by the sea, surrounded by his servile courtiers, made a very pretty picture, which, however, was historically incorrect, since in the background is painted a faithful presentment of the white cliffs of Dover, and it was on the beach at Southampton that Canute bade the waves stand still.

The rooms of the corridor are vaulted and richly decorated with gesso work elaborately



CHARLOTTENLUND SLOT, THE CROWN PRINCE'S RESIDENCE.

gift and painted. An old and excellent copy of the Bayeux tapestry hangs in these rooms. Fredricksborg was much injured by fire in 1859, but it has been well restored at the nation's expense. How it is that the Royal Family of Denmark can resist the temptation of living amid such beauty and artistic perfection I cannot imagine. The views from every window are beautiful. At one's feet lies the lake opposite green well-wooded banks, beech forest, and lovely gardens slope to the water. The Castle is now-a-days a museum like Rosenborg, and custodians and tourists have it all to themselves. The ceilings in Rosenborg are unique. One finds mouldings apparently gone mad with luxuriance of Barocco fancy; naked Cupids, large as life, women larger than life "naked," and yet "not ashamed"; fruit in profusion, pendant ornaments, armorial bearings, and every conceivable jumble of imagination. The proportions of the rooms are noble, the floors are all of oak, the decorations gorgeously rich, and the old oak cabinets, the tables, tapestries, and chairs are worth seeing. Of the pictures there is a vast amount of rubbish at Fredricksborg, but many are interesting from an historic point of view, and one forgives their worthlessness,

artistically speaking. To us a most interesting picture was the enormous one by Juxen of the Danish Royal Family. In the middle of the canvas the King and Queen are portrayed. Her Majesty wearing a red dress. The late Emperor of Russia stands a colossal and powerful figure with his dainty little Empress by his side, and her small hand resting on his big arm. The Prince of Wales (most

life-like and extraordinarily well painted) is seated, and behind his chair stands the Princess, a vision of loveliness in pale blue. Close by is the poor Duke of Clarence, pictured most characteristically with that inherent grace of figure and attitude to which no photographer ever did justice. The Queen of Greece seemed to me hardly handsome enough, and the painter has over elaborated her very pronounced toilette of cream satin, brocaded with red roses nearly as big as cabbages. The Crown Princess is seated, a plain-featured but most regal and noble-looking woman, with undeniable presence. The numerous Royal children are scattered about over the picture, and with bold masterly touches are they suggested. The date is 1886.

Over a door in Fredricksborg I saw a curious genealogical tree of the Oldenburgs. Dorothea, the wife of Christian the First and widow of Christopher the Bavarian, is to be seen wearing a white linen head-dress with extraordinary bandage like a respirator over her mouth. Fredrick the First's wife looks innocent and comely in a coquettish little black velvet cap with white feather. A remarkable portrait (quite one of the best in the collection) is that labelled:

"Hertuginde Christine af Lothringen, Kongen Christian den Andens datter," 1521-1590. I have no idea who painted this picture, but whoever the artist may have been, he knew his trade. There is not an uncertain touch or a false note in the whole painting. The effect is strong and simple, and in its strength and simplicity the portrait stands out from all about it. The face of the Princess is rather plain as regards feature, but youthful and alive with character, intelligence, sense, and goodness. The eyes look at one uncompromisingly and gravely, for there is nothing flippant or affected about Hertuginde af Lothringen, and even her dress expresses solidity and social status. A rich severely cut black satin gown has over it a long black velvet mantle trimmed with sable. On the Princess's light hair rests a close-fitting black velvet coif. The back-ground of the picture is indigo blue,

and the only relief from blacks and blues is to be found in the browns of the sables and the creamy tinted face and hands. There are no sanguine flesh tints and the complexion is pale and clear, perfectly healthy, yet exquisitely delicate. I should say that Lucas Cranach painted the picture, but I have absolutely nothing to support my opinion except the *technique* displayed, and the fact that as he died in 1553, and Hertuginde was born in 1521, he might well have done so as regards dates. We could not find a French, German, Italian, or English catalogue of the pictures, and Danish was worse than Hebrew to us. In a room not far off, the parents of Queen Anne of Denmark hang side by side. Sophia of Mecklenburg must have been a remarkably beautiful woman. We see her in a full length painting in the bloom of youth and fulness of beauty, dressed in a



FACADE OF FREDRICKSBORG CASTLE AND COURTYARD.

black velvet gown, gold girdle, huge muff, and pearl and lace cap, which partly covers her auburn hair. A later portrait in the same room is a cruel commentary on the text "All that's bright must fade." In a recess in the window hang engravings from paintings of James the First and his Queen. Anne of Denmark seems to have resembled her mother in the matter of good looks. Her sister, who married Adolph of Holstein-Gottorp, was also handsome, and to judge from the portraits of the different members of the family, they must all have been more or less endowed with the fatal gift. Denmark formerly possessed a fine collection of Stuart portraits, sent by James the First and Anne, to their brother, Christian the Fourth. The greater number of these, with many another good picture, were destroyed in the fatal fire of Fredricksborg. More than one portrait of Tycho Brahé and his gold nose hangs at Fredricksborg. Brahé's scientific pursuits were undoubtedly in advance of his time, for his relations lamented his "low tastes"; and although he had great success in Frederick the Second's reign, he fared very badly in that of Christian the Fourth. It is to the credit of Bohemia that it welcomed the exiled astronomer to its capital, where he died in 1601. Tycho Brahé lost his nose in a duel, and replaced it by a gold one. His observations on the new star in Cassiopeia first brought him into notice.

Eleanor Ulfield's portrait is distinctly disappointing. Assuredly few traces of the beauty which worked her destruction are to be found in the picture. My note-book says, "A rather long and oval face of a colourless complexion, hair fair, and hanging on either side of her face; features regular, expression melancholy. She wears a black velvet hat, trimmed with a white feather, and carries a fan in her hand. Two dogs, one a pug and the other a spaniel, are in the foreground of the picture." Inigo Jones' portrait was (to us English people) interesting, and still more so was the beautiful picture of Charles the First of England, painted when he was

a small boy. In this, his face is intensely sweet and charming in expression, without a foreboding of the melancholy of later years. The dress (white satin, relieved by a crimson silk sash and creamy point lace collar), is all that is picturesque. In the little Prince's hand are a plumed hat and riding whip.

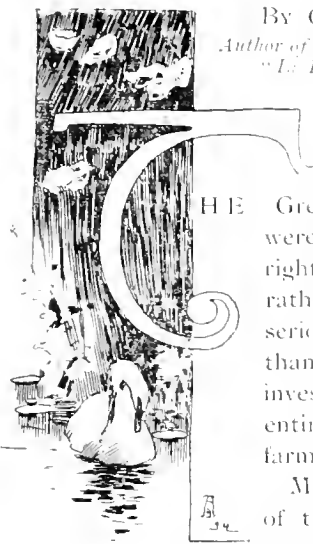
The prettiest woman in the whole picture-gallery, to my idea, was our English Princess, Henrietta Duchess of Orleans. Nothing could be more perfect than her shape, arm, hand, throat, and bust; her dignity and grace of carriage, or beauty of face. Her mouth is exquisite (a Cupid's bow); her colouring delicate, yet radiant. Her dress a triumph of artistic magnificence—a gold brocade with mantle of dark electric blue velvet. I confess to losing sympathy with the ill-treated Carolina Matilda when I see her portraits, so heavy and voluptuous looking, almost gross are they; the Georgian type at its worst, and a painful contrast to the dainty ethereal exquisite Stuart Princess. Christian the Fourth's wife could never have been a beauty if one may judge from the portrait hanging in the long gallery at Fredricksborg. A really lovely creature was her grand-daughter, the child of Frederick the Third and Sophia Amelia of Brunswick Lunebourg. Sophia, Frederick the Second's wife, looks youthful and charming in a portrait not far from Anna Katharine's picture. She is demurely posed with hands meekly crossed, mouth as if saying "prunes and prisms"; ruff and green velvet gown. But enough of Kings and Queens and pictures! We were at last so surfeited with them that we gladly escaped into the sunshine of the courtyard, and found rest and refreshment lounging by the edge of the lake, and admiring the Castle from every point of view. Afterwards we peeped into the Chapel and saw its ebony and ivory pulpit and royal pew and pictures. Then, wearied and famished, we strolled to the Hotel Leidersdorff, where we were supplied with an excellent luncheon.

THE OTHER ONE.

A LITTLE RUSTIC IRONY.

By GEORGE MORLEY

Author of "*Leafy Warwickshire*,"
"*La Rustic Livery*," etc.



THE Greenwood brothers were their mother's right hand. Mat being rather of a more serious turn of mind than Mark, in him was invested the almost entire control of the farm.

Mark was the Abel of the house; he was engaged with the lambs.

It was about ten of the forenoon. The pigeons on the red tiles and peaks of the Manor Farm were becoming merry. All the long winter, which had stricken ice into their blood and bones, had now vanished. The sun was thawing their spirits. The music of their cooing harmonised sweetly with the rythmical "click, click" of the plough as Mat drove it merrily afield.

All Nature seemed in ecstacy. Her long period of dormancy was now over. She awoke from her quiescence with a warm heart and a bright face. Her buds were everywhere bursting with marvellous activity, tipping—and in some places, where natural life was more advanced than in others, clothing—the naked twigs of the hedgerows with a thick and lively green—the "bread and cheese" of the rustic children.

It was as hot as summer, though but a day in the first week of April. The cattle in the Home Close—the milking cows, the ewes, and the young canlings—seemed in doubt as to what Nature meant by so sudden and delightful a change. They nibbled the

grass, looked up at the sun, and then at the bare stalks of the buckthorn bushes, and wondered.

All was so strange to them. The spars and forks of the ash, the oak, and the beech shot up into the sky, brown and naked as they had been all winter through. Yet the sun was gleaming down upon them like the sun of the corn harvest. And there was Mark, the shepherd, in the Close, stripped to his shirt, with a large sun hat upon his head of flaxen hair.

Then the air was singing with sounds, was alive with them, echoing with the full-throated music of a thousand birds, all singing to the sun, all glorifying him, worshipping him.

The lark's song was the sweetest, the longest, and the most distinctly heard. She rose fluttering up from the furrow made by Mat's plough. She hovered over his head, sang red-throated madrigals to him, as she careered upward. Then her music came down tremblingly down, down, almost to his feet, as she dropped from the blue sky into a chocolate-coloured rut near to the nose of the leading horse.

Mat regarded the skylark fluttering over him and singing over him as a good sign. It was a fair omen. To his country-grown mind it betokened happiness, contentment, peace. Not that he needed to look at omens; his life was all happiness, contentment, peace. But dwellers in isolated spots, no matter what their lives may be, observe the signs of nature in whatever form they appear in the action of birds, the motion of water, the hue of the sky, the condition of sheep, the aspect of tree, hedge, ditch, and flower.

And Mat was an observer of signs, for he was a true villager. He looked up at the lark as it fluttered over his head, and smiled benignantly.

"Ah! if I could only tell her as pretty a tale as thee tellest me," he said to the bird.

The bird made no reply, but dropped, as we have seen, like a stone from the sky into

the rut, bringing her song to a conclusion with a dead stop.

This pleased him less; it was not so bright an omen. It was like the sudden breaking of a harp string. It brought a grave look over the face of Mat. Then a proud tailor, radiant in new feathers, with the sheen of the sun cast upon them, had the impertinence to settle upon the back of the rear horse, and to stare gaily and knowingly at Mat.

This delighted him; it was the fairest sign. Proud tailors were rare in the neighbourhood of Lynton. It was rarer still for one to settle on his horse and appear so cocky. Mat's face visibly brightened. The proud tailor's behaviour interested him. He did not know then that it was only a little irony, and that he should have sworn by the lark.

He went round the square of glebe bravely, cutting well in with his blade, and throwing up the soil heavily, much to the perturbation of worms, beetles, and slugs, who had begun the business of nidification in earnest.

Every now and then, when he turned the plough round to the western hedge, he looked with glistening blue eyes through the openings of the twigs towards the Vicarage. Its red-tiled roof and the tower of the adjacent church loomed above the hedge-rows and tree-tops. In that direction there evidently lay a charm; he was continually looking there. It was as if he expected to see Hetty Foy blowing him kisses from the summit of the crusted tower.

As he came from the south corner down the eastward skirting of the field the sweet, low murmuring of a woman's voice was gently borne to his wakeful ear.

Now, when a certain change has taken place in a man—for example, when he is in love—sounds which formerly had no interest for him now stir his feelings to their very depths. So it was with Mat Greenwood. When he heard that soft, low, sweet, cooing, crooning kind of noise he started, shook, and dithered, as if the fact of hearing it was an

important epoch in his life—for his weal or his woe.

This foretold a knowledge of the—as yet—invisible one from whom the sweet sounds proceeded. It also suggested a feeling of deep and tender interest.

The hedge-row on that side of the field, being nearer east and receiving more sunshine, had responded to the warmth by putting forth more leaves than the hedges on the three other sides of the glebe. Standing in the middle of the field, distance made this hedge-row look fully clothed. Such, however, was not quite the case. It was thick with leaves only at those points where elder grew between the thorns, for the reason that elder buds early, and the leafage bursts out without pause, as if in a mighty hurry to clothe the stems.

Mat left his horses in the middle of a furrow, and walked slowly over the ploughed ground to an elder bush in a straight line from where he was ploughing. He was lured by the fluty notes that came hovering to him. He was going to call Hetty; he was sure it was she. He was going to give her a morning greeting.

He looked through the small interstices between the elder twigs, and stopped suddenly, with a half-gasp of surprise, so interesting a sight flashed itself upon his vision.

The Home Close was in a veritable blaze of sunlight. All Nature there was gleaming and dazzling. Mat stood in shadow, and looked out over a picture of gold. He could not take his eyes from the picture. He was fascinated by it; not so much, perhaps, at the glorious glow of sunlight, or at the peaceful and harmonious aspect of all things that lay beneath it, as at a figure kneeling in the north-east corner of the croft, on the warm edge of the rick-yard, by a low red-brick wall which added colour to the scene.

The figure in the stooping posture was Hetty Foy.

Unconscious of being observed by any eyes but those of the sheep and caulings and the flock of grey geese, which, with elevated

* The Warwickshire name of the goldfinch.

necks, was gazing at her as at a gem dropped from the clouds, Hetty appeared in all the natural charms of her youthful beauty.

She had anticipated summer by clothing herself in a white gown, conveniently short for wear in the fields. This showed the curves and graces of her person—so much as could be seen of them in her crouching position—off to advantage. Mat could not help noting them; they forced themselves so seductively upon the eye. To him she had all the graces of a swan, combined with the gentleness of a dove.

The slight wind that hovered round the Close took so many liberties with Hetty's hat that, in a moment of petulance, she removed it and laid it in her lap. Thus she bared to view the sweetest of all her charms. She showed a face, oval in shape, rich in colour, sparkling with life, blushing with subdued excitement; a face whose beauty was heightened by a pair of large, luminous, dreamy brown eyes, and a heavy crop of dark hair, that fell in reckless town-bred fashion upon her forehead.

It was a face full of material beauty, made for the victor in many conquests.

Constancy was marked upon it, but not with so lavish a hand as passion, pride, and power. What the face lacked spiritually was made up materially. It was emphatically a face for the world, for the admiration of the many. Now, at the age of eighteen, that face was content to be loved by two persons; by and by it would hunger for the admiration of a hundred or two.

But the face was very beautiful. It was more lovely now in the freshness of its youth, with the bloom of innocence upon it, than it would be five years hence, having passed through the storm-passions of life. It was a face few could look upon and not admire.

The girl who owned this face was the apple of Mat's eye.

Love had come upon him suddenly, with the swiftness of an avalanche, with the warmth of the Sirocco. It was one day when Hetty, in a lively and frolicsome mood,

ran up to him and kissed him without asking leave. He would have liked her often to have done that; the experience was so novel and pleasant. She never, however, did it again. She even omitted to tell him that she meant the kiss for Mark, his brother!

But that kiss, and the memory of it, kindled a fire in Mat's heart. He could not extinguish it; in fact, he did not try to, though the fire had now come to such a head that it threatened to burn him entirely up. He would not have cared if it had. Wakeful, strong, passionate, even warlike love, had him in the toils, and he had no sad dream that Hetty had made a mistake in kissing him.

"Love'll raggle to know without etherins," he had said.

He stood and watched Hetty with a look of yearning and intense love. His face already bore the traces of passion's power, of passion's slavery. He was like a man whose soul has passed from him into another's keeping.

Hetty was pre-occupied in a work of country superstition. She had a blade of horned grass in her hand, and was telling the names of the twin brothers upon the horns.

Village children in Lynton and the neighbourhood constantly resort to this custom. They pluck a blade of horned grass, and profess to learn their fate by the number of horns. Girls chiefly do this. They are so anxious to know what their future lives will be. The method is to tell the horns and rehearse the formula—

Rich man,
Poor man,
A beggar man,
A thief!

These words are applied to all the horns upon the stalk, and whatever the last one tells, that is the fate of the seeker after knowledge.

There are additions to the formula, all travelling in the same direction, as—

Silk,
Satin,
Muslin,
Rags!

THE OTHER ONE.

And again

Little house.
Big house.
Pigsty.
Barn.

And the last

Coach.
Carriage.
Spring Cart.
Wheelbarrow.

Hetty Foy had often observed the children of the village performing these folk-lore rites. She now applied them to her own case—more in a fit of playfulness than from a belief in the superstition. Except for a thin gauzy cloud which made its appearance now and then, superstition had no lodgment in her healthy mind.

She had the blade of grass in her fingers, and was crooning out the names of the brothers in that soft, fluty voice, the sound of which had drawn Mat thither—

Mat,
Mark,
Mat,
Mark,
Mat.

Mat's heart danced with joy; it beat madly against his shirt. It was with much difficulty that he restrained himself from calling out, for the grass had told his name; and his quick mind, palpitating with love as it was, quickly divined the purpose of Hetty. She was seeking her choice through the folk-lore rite.

But the pouting beauty near the rick wall was not satisfied.

"I must try another," she sighed, and Mat's face fell. "This is not the right one."

She threw the blade of grass away as if it had told her some disappointing news. She then leaned forward, and plucked another blade.

Mat's face grew shadowed. The smile that was lighting it up a moment ago slid down his face with a rush, and escaped by

way of his chin. In its place came a frown dark, large, and bitter. His eyes seemed to darken. Their sky-blue deepened to a shade between indigo and black. Lines rose up on his forehead and round his mouth, which added five years to his age. His red colour forsook his cheeks.

Such were the effects of anticipated disappointment upon his bright, fair face. It was a sudden transition from lively, hilarious hope to blank and melancholy despair.

At the end of the red rick wall, farthest from Hetty and the nearest to him, at a point where it formed an angle and ran northward and eastward: just there, stooping down, in half concealment, with a lamb at his feet, and his face in a glow of sunshine, there Mat saw his brother Mark, alert and joyful, looking towards Hetty, who, as yet, was unconscious of his presence—Hetty, the apple of *his* eye—and of Mat's!

In his intense love for Hetty, in his profound interest in the scene she was developing, Mat, until now, had no other eyes for anything but her. New love is strong, masterful, dictatorial. It brooks no crossing, it admits no "if," no "perhaps." It jumps to one conclusion, from which it never swerves. Its confidence is tyrannical.

Mat, in the delirium of passion, rushed headlong to the thesis that it was impossible for him to love Hetty and for Hetty *not* to love him. He took that for granted. Had he been less a child of Nature than he was, he would have pondered that contingency. In the honest glow of his affection he never thought of that.

When a curl of Mark's golden head drew Mat's eye to the angle of the red wall, and when he saw the light of buoyant love upon his brother's face, then it was that Mat felt the contingency striking into his heart like a knife.

He stood and watched, though he was pale as death, and every limb dithered, like the dead leaves on the oak branches above him.

Then he heard the crooning voice of Hetty

again, as she told the spikes of the new blade of grass—

Mat.

Mark.

Mat.

Mark.

Mat.

Mark.

Mat.

Mark!

"I knew it was Mark," she cooed to herself, kissing the tongue of grass that had told her what she made it tell. "Dear Mark, sweet Mark! He's the one—he's the one."

That was enough for Mark—too much for Mat.

The former bounded out of his place of concealment, leaving his lamb where it lay, and almost before Hetty had risen to her feet he had her in his arms, kissing her.

"Oh! Hetty, Hetty, Hetty."

"Oh! Marky, Marky, Marky."

Those were the only words they could utter, and they were enough just then.

Mat shivered, the irony was so bitter.

He saw from his position behind the elder bush that Hetty made no sign of disapproval at Mark's tempestuous love-making. She only reddened at being caught unawares. She even returned the kisses as fast as Mark rained them upon her. And Mat would not have dared to kiss her at all without leave!

He waited to see no more. He walked slowly back to the plough, where the horses were standing in the rut, just where he had left them—where they would have stood for a day had nothing interrupted them. His mind was in a convulsion, his heart was breaking, two great loves were rending his very life to pieces.

But the irony of one was complete. And yet he loved Hetty now with a more intense yearning than ever before. Poor Mat! Poor Mat!

QUEENS AT HOME (SOUTHERN EUROPE).

FEW more beloved sovereigns exist in Europe to-day than Margherita, Queen of Italy, the "Pearl of Savoy," as she is affectionately entitled. Beautiful, clever, full of tact, and with a charm of manner that is quite her own, the gracious consort of King Humbert wins the hearts not only of all her warm-hearted subjects, but of every stranger who enjoys the privilege of knowing her. Her life at the Quirinal is full of interest, as one may readily believe, taking into consideration the Queen's many talents and the beautiful city in which she lives. The part of the palace in which her own rooms are situated overlooks the gardens. She has a bedroom, a boudoir, and a drawing-room, in which she receives a few intimate friends. The Queen is a very early riser, and she never retires until long after the rest of her household, liking the silence of the midnight hours for pursuing her studies. All the morning she devotes to her correspondence and to reading, and as she is an accomplished linguist, speaking and writing French, English, German, Spanish, and Latin fluently, her reading is a very important part of the day's work. Queen Margherita's opinion on any great book in these languages is eagerly sought for. She is also an authoress herself, frequently writing Latin verses and making translations from foreign authors. Shakespeare and Goethe are great favourites of hers, and she has published a book on Shakespeare's heroines. After lunch, which is a very simple meal at the palace. Her Majesty generally goes out, often on foot and attended only by one lady, sometimes in a cab. She visits the different studios, often surprising and delighting some quite unknown painter by her presence and her kindly criticism, for she paints and draws a little, and takes great interest in the work. From the studios she goes on to some charitable institution, and



THE QUEEN OF ITALY.

after four o'clock a select number of guests are received in her drawing-room, previous to Her Majesty taking a drive. Then comes the hour which she enjoys the most, and which no circumstances are allowed to interfere with: this she spends in King Humbert's study, reading or talking to him, or playing either on the piano, the lute, or the lyre. Dinner, a very sociable function, is at seven o'clock, one or two guests besides the ladies and gentlemen-in-waiting being present. The evening is then spent by the King and Queen with their household. In the fine weather the whole party adjourn to the gardens, and enjoy a stroll along the flower-scented paths. The Queen likes one lady-in-waiting to sit up in the room adjoining her's in case she should be required, but with her usual forethought, she does not ask the same lady to burn the midnight oil twice in succession.

Of Queen Margherita's tastes, everyone, I think, has heard. She, like all Savoyards,

is an inveterate mountaineer, and she is never so happy as when scaling some lofty height, or springing lightly over the rocky boulders of her native land. In the neighbourhood of Gressoney, where she has a delightful country chateau, she is dearly loved by the people, sympathising in weal or woe with them, and wearing the picturesque costume of the women of the valley—a short scarlet skirt, a dark silk apron, a white chemisette and sleeves, and over this the pretty Swiss bodice of black velvet. The difficulty of finding companions who are able to endure the fatigue of mountaineering is great, and the Queen often laughs at the attempts some of her ladies make at cutting their way up the white cliffs. Botany being a favourite study of hers, she is able to collect specimens on the mountains. Her breakfast—some bread and milk—is often served at two in the morning, so determined is this Royal lady to do “a good day's work in the way of climbing.”

She is passionately fond of children, especially blind ones, and many a sightless little one in Italy has had reason to bless the charitable woman, who is a veritable fairy queen to them.

Dress and jewellery appeal very strongly to Queen Margherita. She is always beautifully attired, and her husband and her son, the Prince of Naples, take the greatest pleasure in adding year by year to her store of jewels, her ropes of pearls being of world-wide celebrity.

A queen in whom much interest must be felt at the present time is Queen Olga of Greece, still a very beautiful woman, with grave eyes and a serious face, and a manner which is always subdued. Together with the Empress Frederick of Germany, Queen Olga is noted for her extreme goodness to the poor, especially to the sick. Almost without exception, the benevolent institutions in Athens owe their origin to her, and the Evangelismos Hospital there is entirely managed by her, and visited every day by its royal patroness, who spends hours beside

the patients. Some days she visits the State prisons, and she talks so kindly and encouragingly to the prisoners, that they are often much influenced for good.

During the recent war the Queen became a veritable sister of mercy, dressing the soldiers' wounds, and nursing them hour by hour, as they were brought into the roughly-improvised hospitals on the frontier. Her Majesty and her daughter-in-law, the Crown Princess, and her daughter, Princess Marie, formed the "Union of the Women of Greece," for helping to nurse the wounded and to look after the destitute families whom the war deprived of their bread-winners. Much of this help came out of their private purses.

In less troublous times the Queen is devoted to study; usually, something historical or scientific engrosses her. She does not care for State functions, or for many social ones, for she is quite devoted to her husband, her five sons, and her only remaining daughter, her eldest having been killed in a carriage accident a few years ago. She was the wife of the Grand Duke Paul of Russia, and her children are great pets of their grandmother, the Queen. Her Majesty is at heart still a true Russian. Her father was the Grand Duke Constantine, the great uncle of the last Czar, and she was always wrapped up in him. Her favourite recreation is yachting, and up to the outbreak of the war she held the appointment of lady admiral in the Russian navy, the only one in the world.

The home life of the Queen Regent of Spain is of the simplest. She is one of the most deeply religious women in Europe, and she is a great favourite with the Pope, who often sends her beautiful presents. At six o'clock Her Majesty is generally out of bed, and after making her morning toilette, she spends some time in prayer. Then comes a visit to her children's rooms, the little King Alfonso always having some funny remark to make to his mother, either about the plans for the day, or of some dream he has had.

He is very fond of the Queen, and well he may be, for she is not only a very good mother, but the best guardian any young sovereign could possibly have; indeed, she gives up most of her life to her children, sharing their pleasures, soothing and nursing them when ill, and superintending their studies. The Queen is a very clever woman, understanding all affairs of State, and managing to hold the reins of government for her son in a very wise way. She speaks and writes four languages, and she is passionately fond of music, especially of the violin. She is a fearless rider, and in the royal stables some of the most perfect specimens of English, Spanish, Irish, and Arabian horses are to be found. Her Majesty makes great pets of these, and goes out with sugar for them. She has all her meals with her children, and never dines out; indeed, she denies herself all gaiety save what they can enjoy with her. The winter months are spent at the Palace of the



THE QUEEN OF GREECE.

Escorial in Madrid, the summer ones at Saint Sebastian, where by the sea stands one of the most exquisite of European palaces. The Queen is particularly fond of this marine home, and she always says she feels happier here than in Madrid. Her most intimate friends and her favourite relations come here to stay, and altogether it is a merry party which is located in the hot weather at this Spanish seaside resort. The King has also a decided preference for San Sebastian, and answers with alacrity when his mother says, "Alphonsito, are you ready to go to the sea?" Her Majesty, as are most of the ladies in Spain, is a great smoker, and she, like the Empress of Austria and Queen Margherita, enjoys several cigarettes every day. She has always been very anxious that the little King should speak and write German fluently, and she herself compiled a little German grammar and reading-book for his use and for that of his sister, Princess Maria Theresa, who is constantly with him. The other daughter, the Princess Maria de las Mercedes, is now exempt from school-room thralldom, as she is seventeen years of age. Her mother will doubtless take more part in society now that she has a daughter to introduce to the world.

Quite English in her tastes is Amélie, the fair-haired Queen of Portugal, for she was, like her sister Hélène, the young Duchess d' Aosta, brought up almost entirely in England, dividing her time between Kingston-on-Thames and the beautiful home of the Comte de Paris at Stowe, Buckinghamshire. Rumour—that many-sided news carrier—has it that the Royal couple on the throne of this peninsular kingdom are amongst the happiest on the Continent, and one can quite believe the pleasant report when we look at Queen Amélie's handsome *spirituelle* face and at the genial one of Don Carlos the King. She is a keen sportswoman, as might be expected seeing how much of her girlhood was spent in the hunting field, the Comtesse de Paris not only liking her daughters to ride

well, but also to be able to shoot. As a swimmer the Queen of Portugal has few rivals, and she enjoys nothing so much as a good hour or two in the sea, though she has, like less fortunate aquatic performers, to content herself often with inland waters. Her two sons, Louis and Manual, take up a great deal of Her Majesty's time, for she is quite devoted to them, and thinks no mother ever had two such boys. She often sits in the room while they are having their studies, and she takes the greatest interest in everything they do. I may add here that Her Majesty is an adept at all boys' games, and her sons are enthusiastic admirers of her skill in these.

For her more serious hours Queen Amélie has a study which is all absorbent. She is an excellent doctor, and her study is that of medicine. She is a clever anatomist, and frequently she gives lectures in Lisbon on the subject, treating it from various stand-points. One of her last was on tight-lacing, and its injurious effects on the constitution. In order to demonstrate this she is applying the Röntgen rays to the figures of her ladies of the Court, and woe to those who have been cultivating a small waist. In spite of this close scrutiny and *surveillance* the Portuguese Court ladies have a very happy life, and a most indulgent Royal mistress to serve.

I' propos of Her Majesty's proficiency in swimming, some few years ago she was in the water when she saw two little peasant boys struggling for their lives in the waves. She immediately struck out in their direction, and thanks to her strength and courage, and to her knowledge of the needful movements in the water, she succeeded in saving them both. In recognition of this brave act the Queen was awarded the medal of the society which in Portugal stands in the same light as our Royal Humane Society.

Most of the readers of *ATALANTA* are too young to remember the Empress of Austria as other than a very saddened woman, but in her younger days she was a high-spirited

beauty, who had half Europe at her feet. Her love of riding brought her a great deal to Ireland and to the English hunting shires, but a nervous complaint from which she suffered obliged her to give up the exercise. Now she walks inveterately, making long excursions in the neighbourhood of her lovely home, Castle Achilleion, Corfu. This house has now become the favourite residence of Her Imperial Majesty. It is a dream of loveliness both inside and out. It is full of exquisite statuary, pictures, and all the Empress's own books and knick-knacks. Her private rooms are furnished with consummate taste; frescoes of classical subjects are on the walls, flowers and china are everywhere, and luxurious silken hangings. Since the death of her son, the Archduke Rudolph, she has absented herself from all Court functions, so that her life is verily a home one. Sometimes she spends a few weeks at Castle Gödöllő, which was a coronation gift of the Hungarian nobles, and occasionally she goes a yachting tour, but most of the year she is to be found in this ideal villa, perched on the olive and vine-clad slopes of Corfu, where the cypress trees shelter from the hot sun, and the cooling splash of the blue waters is the only sound. The Empress has quite a mania for building, and erects lovely villas at enormous expense, which, perhaps, she never spends a day in. For the last few years her chief pleasure has lain in mastering modern Greek. This she has quite succeeded in, and she reads the language as she walks on the mountains, her Greek tutor accompanying her. She also speaks and reads Hungarian, English, French, and Italian.

Like the Queen of Italy, this Austrian Royal lady is often up at four in the morning. She dresses herself, only allowing her maid to brush out her hair. Then, if fine, she walks for an hour in the gardens; if wet she promenades up and down the salons, always taking rapid steps, and thinking deeply the while. At half-past six she has some tea, and until ten o'clock she writes letters and reads, when a light luncheon is served. Then

she puts on her short walking dress and sets off with the tutor and a man-servant. She will stop at a farm or shepherd's hut for a little milk and bread, but she never sits down, even to take this. When the Emperor is with her, or any guests, dinner is served at seven, but the Empress does not touch it. She pretends to, and when alone no dinner is served, but only iced milk. In the evenings she again reads or writes letters, and retires to bed at ten. In her room, just opposite the bed, there is a life-size statue of Niobe, and all night emerald-coloured electric lights are burning in this corner.

The favourite flowers of this melancholy Empress are violets and roses, but the Emperor has a special liking for Edelweiss, and he calls her the "Edelweiss of Austria." The only photographs of the Empress are those which were taken nearly thirty years ago. She has a rooted objection to the camera since she lost some of her extreme beauty. In figure she is still a young woman, and her wonderful light-brown hair has no



THE QUEEN OF SPAIN.



THE QUEEN OF PORTUGAL.

white amongst it. Time and sorrow have left their marks only on the face. The ladies and gentlemen who have the honour of belonging to Her Majesty's household are one and all devoted to her, for she is exceedingly considerate to all who serve her in any way, and never demands any attention which entails trouble on others. Madame de Ferenczy, her reader, is a Hungarian lady who has been with her for years, and enjoys, like the Comtesse de Festetics, the intimate friendship of the Empress; and Monseigneur Mayer, for over forty years a private chaplain in the Royal family, also comes in for a large share of the Imperial lady's affection.

So much has been written of "Carmen Sylva," the Queen of Roumania, in her dual capacity of sovereign and of authoress, that there remains very little for me to tell of her home life. I will, however, try and describe a day at Castle Pelesch, her lovely house in the Carpathians, which is the favourite residence both of the King and Queen. Her own sanctuary or study, which is shaped like an

oratory, and commands an ideal view of the neighbourhood, finds the Queen often at work before the dawn, writing hard by lamp-light. She has an idea that by thus stealing the hours from her sleeping ones she is not depriving either her husband, her kingdom, or her household of any of the time which should be devoted to them; but I am afraid, like everyone who burns the candle at both ends, the Roumanian Queen will have to pay for it. Castle Pelesch is generally full of private friends of the royal host and hostess, and it is needless to add how enjoyable such visits are, and how time flies in so pleasant a home. During the morning the Queen either walks out with her guests, or else seats herself at her easel to paint missals, whilst one of the ladies reads out aloud from one of the newest of European books. Occasionally the Queen is the reader, and she generally chooses something of her own, a compliment which is much appreciated by any literary visitors who may be at the Castle. Monsieur Pierre Loti, the French novelist, always says that it is one of his happiest memories, the picture of "Carmen Sylva" sitting under the trees in the garden, surrounded by her young ladies dressed in the picturesque national dress, and reading aloud Roumanian folk tales, which she translated into perfect French as she went on. Then comes luncheon, and after it, perhaps, a drive. In town this part of the day is reserved for State work and receptions. At Castle Pelesch dinner is served at seven, and the evening is often devoted to music in the beautiful temple-like room, which is fitted with an organ. The Queen is very fond of Beethoven, and will listen for hours to his music, or to the singing of some of the famous Roumanian folk-songs.

There are no little ones, the only child, a little girl, having died in 1874, and left a void in her mother's heart which it would be difficult to fill, but Her Majesty tries to find consolation in proving a very mother to all the children who come under her notice, in nursing the sick, and in sympathising with the sorrowful.

LAURA ALEX SMITH.



HOW THE WATERLILIES GREW.

"I LOVE you!" said the Boy, and he threw a great crown of white roses out on to the stream, on whose bank he stood. It lay still for a few moments as the water splashed softly round; then a strange thing happened. Instead of floating down the stream, like the fallen leaves and other things that lay upon the surface, it sank suddenly, as though caught by some unseen hand, and then, stranger still, could be faintly distinguished under the water, moving up the stream.

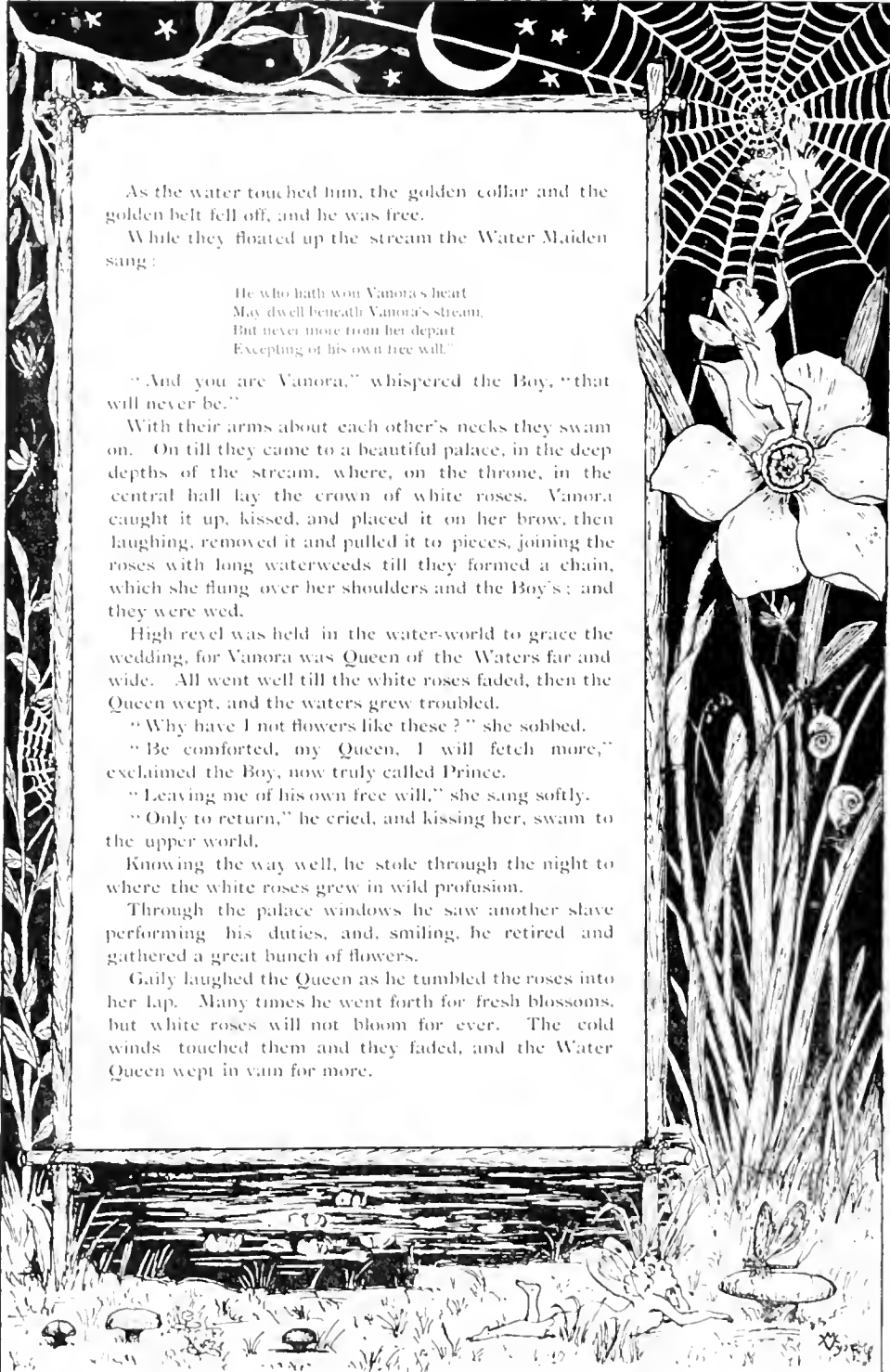
"It is accepted!" cried the Boy, as with smiling face he watched it disappear. Then he flung himself on the green grassy bank, and, unslinging his harp, began to sing and play softly. He was a handsome boy, with the face and form of a young god, and his red robe was girt with a golden girdle; but round his neck was a golden collar, engraved with the name of his master.

He was a favorite slave.

At first his song was very soft and low—slight snatches and fragments—but gradually it grew louder and ever more melodious. He sang a song of his own making, composing as he went; and it was the song of his life.

He ended with a wild appeal to Liberty, which all Nature caught up. For while he sang the birds had gathered round, the insects stayed their flight, the flowers sent forth their elves, the soft spirits of the breeze hung close, the grass and dew fairies peeped from their tiny homes, and hidden behind a group of rushes listened the lovely spirit of the stream. Startled by the unexpected echo of his song, the Boy sprang up and gazed bewildered at the sight of beings of whom he had oftener dreamed, but never seen. As he looked the lovely Water Spirit rose and stood upon the surface of the stream. She smiled and raised her arms, and he, with one glad cry, sprang to their embrace.

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As the water touched him, the golden collar and the golden belt fell off, and he was free.

While they floated up the stream the Water Maiden sang :

He who hath won Vanora's heart
May dwell beneath Vanora's stream,
But never more from her depart
Excepting of his own free will."

"And you are Vanora," whispered the Boy, "that will never be."

With their arms about each other's necks they swam on. On till they came to a beautiful palace, in the deep depths of the stream, where, on the throne, in the central hall lay the crown of white roses. Vanora caught it up, kissed, and placed it on her brow, then laughing, removed it and pulled it to pieces, joining the roses with long waterweeds till they formed a chain, which she flung over her shoulders and the Boy's; and they were wed.

High revel was held in the water-world to grace the wedding, for Vanora was Queen of the Waters far and wide. All went well till the white roses faded, then the Queen wept, and the waters grew troubled.

"Why have I not flowers like these?" she sobbed.

"Be comforted, my Queen, I will fetch more," exclaimed the Boy, now truly called Prince.

"Leaving me of his own free will," she sang softly.

"Only to return," he cried, and kissing her, swam to the upper world.

Knowing the way well, he stole through the night to where the white roses grew in wild profusion.

Through the palace windows he saw another slave performing his duties, and, smiling, he retired and gathered a great bunch of flowers.

Gaily laughed the Queen as he tumbled the roses into her lap. Many times he went forth for fresh blossoms, but white roses will not bloom for ever. The cold winds touched them and they faded, and the Water Queen wept in vain for more.

At last a nymph whispered, "Might not we grow white flowers below the water?" And the Queen whispered the same to the Prince, who caught her in his arms, crying "Weep no more, Vanora, though snow lies on the land and ice holds the water, I will break through them and dig for the roots and see what we may do."

So they broke the ice, and the Prince sprang over the snow and with great difficulty obtained a small rose root, and then fled back to the stream, only just in time, for he had been discovered and pursued.

With warm embraces Vanora received him, and together they planted the frozen rose root.

Eagerly they watched, till at last small rolls of green appeared. Slowly, but oh! so slowly they grew upward, then they spread out into large broad leaves, beautiful red brown below, dark rich green above.

But Vanora and the Prince stared; these were not rose leaves, and where were the flowers?

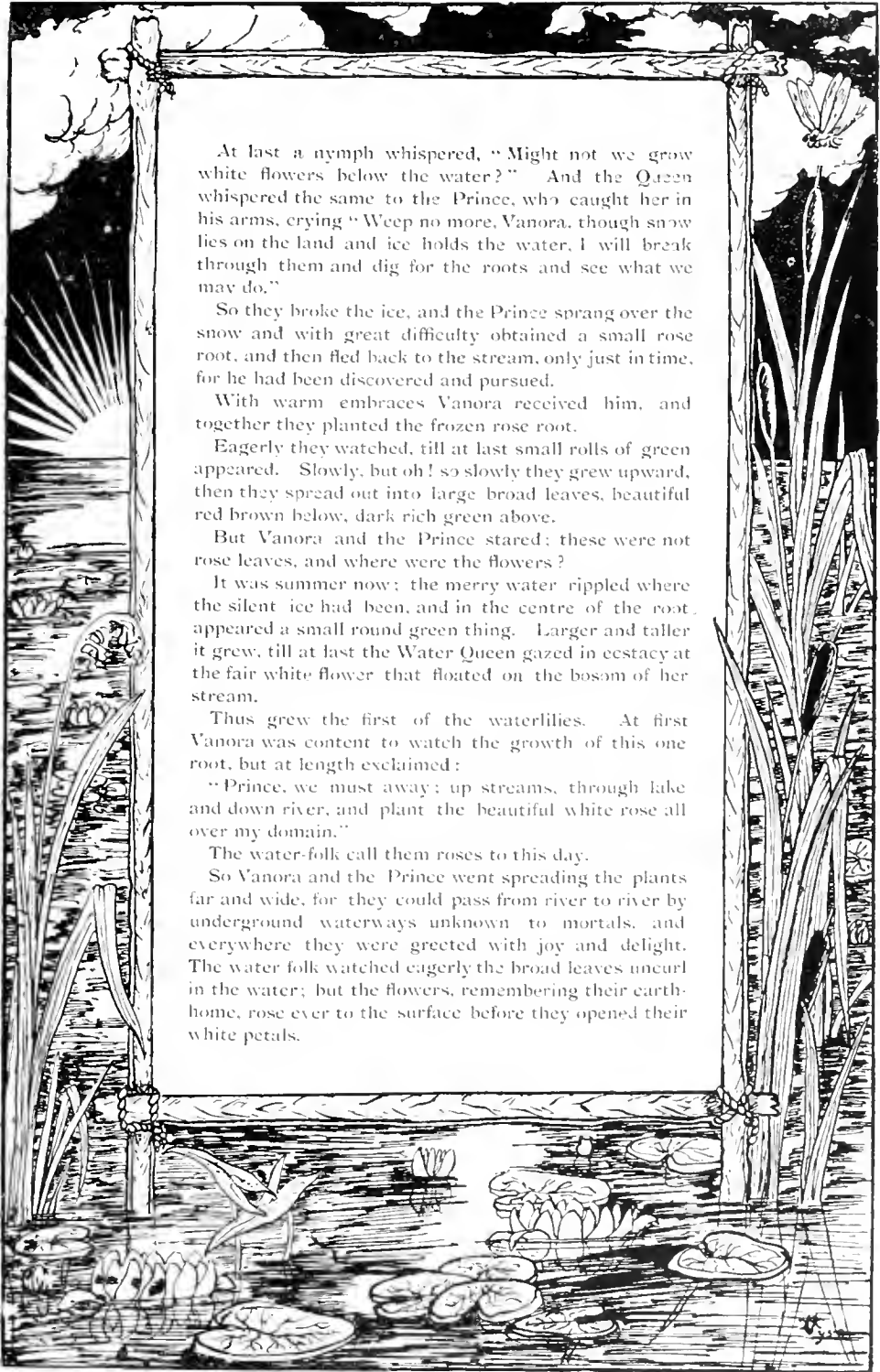
It was summer now; the merry water rippled where the silent ice had been, and in the centre of the root appeared a small round green thing. Larger and taller it grew, till at last the Water Queen gazed in ecstasy at the fair white flower that floated on the bosom of her stream.


Thus grew the first of the waterlilies. At first Vanora was content to watch the growth of this one root, but at length exclaimed:

"Prince, we must away; up streams, through lake and down river, and plant the beautiful white rose all over my domain."

The water-folk call them roses to this day.

So Vanora and the Prince went spreading the plants far and wide, for they could pass from river to river by underground waterways unknown to mortals, and everywhere they were greeted with joy and delight. The water folk watched eagerly the broad leaves uncurl in the water; but the flowers, remembering their earth-home, rose ever to the surface before they opened their white petals.





Now it grows pink, and red, and blue and yellow, but then it was only white, white with the scent of white roses.

One day, as Vanora and the Prince were floating lazily down a broad river, he started and stopped. On the bank stood a tall woman, with a lovely face but snow white hair, and robed in rich but sombre robes. Swiftly hiding behind some rushes, the Prince raised himself in the water and began to sing; and the lady on the bank looked up, listening intently, for the song he sang was the same he had sung to the Water Spirit, only he added all that had happened since.

As he ended he left the rushes, and springing up the bank, dropped at the lady's feet.

"My son, my son, is it indeed you?" she exclaimed, embracing him.

"Yes, Mother, it is I, and I have brought you a daughter," and as he spoke Vanora appeared upon the stream. Her face was sad, and she sang, "Leaving me of his own free will."

"Never," he cried, "and if you cannot dwell on earth my home shall be the water."

"But I can live on earth," she cried merrily as he handed her up the bank, "so that one month each year be spent in water."

But none can tell of the joy with which the old King received his lost son and his fair wife, nor of the revels and rejoicings through the land at the return of the Prince. And everything was waterlilies: they were made in gold and silver, in and on dresses; the very cakes were shaped like them and they were embroidered on the royal standard, for it was certain the waterlilies had brought back the Prince.

MAUD VASE.

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L OVE AND LOBSTER.

CHAPTER I.

It was certainly an "ill-favoured little beast," to use Janet Fordyce's mental exordium as she contemplated the great black thing sprawling its ungainly proportions across a corner of her spotlessly clean kitchen floor.

"He is a splendidly heavy fellow, and fresh from the trap," was the triumphant announcement of her master, the Sheriff, who had himself invaded Janet's kitchen, bearing in his train the worthy Gaelic fisherman in possession of the trophy of admiration, "and the very thing to complete the menu of our little supper, Janet," he supplemented with a boyish flush.

He was a small dapper man, growing grey and inclining to stoutness; but that blush betrayed he had not yet outlived "youth's young dream." Janet, who to tell the truth had never seen a live lobster in her life before, was nevertheless possessed of as far-seeing faculties as her fifty years and her sex warranted. She sent her master a swift, searching look. She had been quick to note his rising colour and anxious demeanour, and her lips contracted ever so little. "Pit it doon," she addressed the fisherman severely. The man was an Islander, and Janet's Scotch was as unintelligible to him as was his volley of Gaelic to Janet, which came in response to her command. "Haud yer tongue!" she broke out sharply, "pit the animal frae yer creel an' gang yer ways." It was evident Janet's temper was not of the smoothest that morning.

"He is telling you to get ready a pan of water to put on the lobster to boil," mildly interpreted the Sheriff, who still hovered in the kitchen doorway, gloating over his recent purchase.

"Guid sakes! an' the puir creetur no deid!" ejaculated Janet, with an air of outraged humanity. The Sheriff laughed.

"Seems you haven't cooked many lobsters in your time, Janet," said he pleasantly. "All right, my man," he addressed the latter in Gaelic, "you can leave it down as she says. She'll see after it by-and-bye no doubt."

But upon the man's departure, the Sheriff himself tarried in the lobster's vicinity "fussin' aboot," as would have been the expression of Janet, who long ere now had made a swift summary of her master's character contained in three words, which, to say the least, were very comprehensive, and were culled from Janet's own vocabulary, viz., "A futery auld maid."

Janet hailed from the country in the Lowlands, and had but lately come north to undertake the duties of housekeeper to the Sheriff of Sigg.

Now Sigg is not a big place; but the Sheriff of Sigg is a "big" man, and Janet's position was one of some importance, though the household consisted only of the Sheriff, herself, and the parlour-maid, Crissy. Janet had come to Sigg, armed with recommendations sufficient to satisfy the most arbitrary of Sheriffs. Superior family, comely looks, excellent culinary powers; all of which qualities the Sheriff had already proved to his own comfort.

In more ways than one also Janet merited his approval. She was less dogmatic than his late controller-in-chief, who, after worrying everyone around her for indefinite years, had at last "worried herself into her grave," so said the gossips. The Sheriff dearly loved his own way; but he was a timid man, and it usually came about that the worthy housekeeper's will was the stronger of the two. Janet's deferential, undemonstrative demeanour was therefore delightful to the master inured to this bygone tyranny. He never would have dared propose the "little supper" in question to the defunct Mary. For it was by no means after the manner of the "dinners" formerly given in the Sheriff's dining-room, with Mary's sanction and under Mary's strict surveillance. It was altogether

informal unprecedented banquet, emanating from the Sheriff's own brain, and which Mary would have dismissed as quite "improper."

The secret of the matter lay in a nutshell.

The Sheriff, for the first time in his forty-two years, was in love, and it came about in this wise.

This memorable autumn, the shootings of Sigg had been rented by Jonathan Clarke, Esq., of Boston City, U.S.A., so said the *Highland News*, in a special column under the heading of "Society Gossip." But it had not detailed how the chief attraction to the select few who formed the rich American's party, was the presence of the said Jonathan's sole child and heiress, Mina, a lovely brunette, still in her teens. The poor Sheriff, like many another, fell captive to Miss Mina's manifold attractions; but whereas his rivals had severally put their fortunes to the test and quitted Sigg and the fair prize thereof, with bitter disappointment, the Sheriff's fate still hung in a balance. Now at the eleventh hour his heart trembled betwixt hope and despair, for before day-break on the morrow the mail packet would bear Mina and Mina's father to the mainland, and what mattered it whither beyond? For already then an arm of the wild Atlantic would roll between them.

The bashful suitor felt the last moment indeed had come. Hence his happy inspiration of the "little supper." The Clarke's shooting-box was some two miles or more from the quay, the Sheriff's house lay within a quarter of that distance. The American's establishment would naturally be in some bustle and discomfort with the departure of so important a retinue of servants. What more simple than that the Sheriff should offer his hospitality to the millionaire and his daughter, "Just a bite with me and no ceremony," as he expressed it in his diffident invitation.

And they were coming!

In his mind's eye the Sheriff pictured that *recherche* supper with no prim hostess (for

the nonce) chaperoning his movements. He could see pretty Mina flitting about in his bachelor's drawing room, discovering here and there some art treasure, or laughing at some flagrant eccentricity in her frankly unmerciful, but delightful way. Perhaps he might even ask her to play on his mother's piano, which doubtless she would tell him was sadly out of tune. Surely there would come some opportunity of making her understand it was she alone had it in her power to keep everything of his in tune henceforth. And then—and then when they walked down together to the steamer in the beautiful moonlight, the parting might not be so hard a thing after all, if it left him with Mina's long-for promise, this should not be *adieu*, but *au-revoir*.

How great an issue depended on the success of his little supper!

The Sheriff lingered in the kitchen doorway with no ostensible reason for so doing; but in reality with a sneaking desire to learn that those supper preparations were progressing favourably. For as ill-luck would have it, an untoward thing had happened to upset his arrangements. Hitherto, his "state" dinners had owed their prestige to the fact that they had been prepared by Mistress Kate, "the wife at the bakery," as Mary had been wont to style that worthy matron. *She* had been south, and had undergone a course of training which rendered her versed in divers wonderful arts beyond Mary's accomplishment, and was ever ready to preside over festivities of the elite of the island. But now, of all times, Mistress Kate was not available. Her brother, a brave old fisherman, lay dead down in S. Uist, and not all the suppers in Christendom would have recalled Mistress Kate from the solemn wake going on from day to day in the crowded, candle-lit death-chamber.

Involuntarily the Sheriff thought of her as he stood there, his eyes reverting from Janet to the lobster, and *vice versa*.

"If only Mistress Kate had been here"! he exclaimed aloud.

From her standpoint on the hearthrug, Janet sniffed audibly.

"I'm thinkin' I can serve up any supper as weel as Mistress Kate!" said she.

In her heat she omitted the "Sir," about which she was usually so punctilious in her speech to her master. Janet possessed an innate reverence for "the Law" and though at times she was apt inwardly to condemn the Sheriff as being "A bit budie wi' no muckle dignity," he was frequently elevated to "yer Honor" in her address.

The Sheriff flushed. He was quite conscious of having both wounded Janet's vanity and fallen a trifle in her esteem.

"O! I don't doubt it, Janet," he hastened to say pleasantly, "and of course you have Crissy to help you."

"An' 'deed, sir, I've no sich thing," returned Janet but partly mollified, "there's nae coontin' o' lassies, sir, wha be feckless things whatever, foreby whan there's ony-thing speccial wanted aff them."

"Why—what?" asked the poor Sheriff. How many more unlooked-for difficulties were to be sprung in his path?

"O! weel, she's just gaen an' hurted her han' cuttin' hersel' a picee. I've aye tellt her, sir, she wad dae it; haudin' the loaf o' a leevil i' her left han' an' cuttin' in-tilt wi' her raccht. An' noo she's dane it!" broke off Janet triumphantly.

"Poor girl! poor girl! exclaimed the Sheriff, in his sorrow for Crissy's mishap, forgetting its immediate significance to his supper.

"I hope you sent her to the doctor with it, Janet."

"I packed her aff tae the docter at ninee, sir, an' noo she's awa tae her bed a while. I dinna wonner she's sick-like. An' gin she's no able tae com' doon the nicht, I mun just wait mysel'!"

Having relieved herself of her grievance, Janet hustled about hopefully. Nothing delighted her soul so much as to be unduly busy. But the Sheriff was not so full of assurance.

"I don't see how you are going to manage, Janet," he said feebly; "is there no one you could get to help you?"

Janet bridled again.

"I'm for nae mair lassies i' *my* wey," quoth she, "no that I'm kennin' whaur ane wad eam' frae" she added.

"I am afraid it's impossible for you to do everything, Janet," murmured the master. The supper must be given up! And a carefully worded message to Jonathan Clarke that "owing to domestic arrangements," &c., &c., flashed through the lover's mind. Then suddenly the memory of Mina's face blotted it out, and his heart throbbled rebelliously. Was ever courtship hampered by such petty details?

"I jalouse ye're no wantin' the supper pit aff, sir?" Janet's voice broke in upon his reverie with acrid severity.

"Heaven forbid!" he answered in a breath.

"Then, sir, gin ye'll just leave it a' tae *me*; ye sall hae ye supper, nae fears," said Janet. She grudged every minute of the precious time this parley was taking up. A smile illumined the Sheriff's face.

"You're a wonderful woman, Janet," he said; "and I believe you." He put in his head at the doorway again to give a parting injunction. "You had better put on the lobster to boil now, Janet."

That was the one item on which Janet felt her knowledge at fault, so she condescended to a query.

"Hoo dae ye like it served, sir, gin I may spier?"

"O! just as it is—exactly as it is," was the reassuring reply. "Don't bother to make a salad of it—I like to see the shell. Boil it first of all. Then separate the body from the tail; break off the great claws and crack them at the joints. Arrange 'em all in the dish and garnish with parsley—that's all.

It was evident the Sheriff was well versed on this score.

Janet received his information in silence,

and not without some awe. For the instant she fancied *herself* a prisoner in the dock, and the Sheriff, from his judge's bench, passing sentence that she was forthwith "to be hanged and quartered." She collected her nerves with a little gasp of relief. The Sheriff had taken his departure. She was alone with the lobster.

CHAPTER II.

A calm September gloaming between nine and ten is a witching hour in the Hebrides. The sun has set and disappeared behind the ridge of stony, heath-clad hills. The great sea lies like a fish-pond, and the light, almost clear as noonday, illumines the bay's long curve of shore.

Such was the scene which Mina Clarke looked upon from the Sheriff's drawing-room window that night. "It was altogether too lovely to be shut out from view," she protested, and the Sheriff, only too eager to do her bidding, had lifted the blind and allowed the mystic light to stream in anew. It put to shame the rose-shaded lamp on the escritoire at the other end of the room, where Jonathan Clarke was busily writing some communication in answer to a business letter which had arrived by the steamer an hour or two earlier. "Must positively be answered to-night, my dear Sheriff," he apologised; "means a loss of over forty thousand dollars to me if this doesn't reach London in time for me to wire to New York before Friday. You must scold Mina for bringing me here to do it. She would give me no peace as home. Declared we were late for supper at it is."

"Not at all!—not at all!" reiterated the Sheriff, who had invited his guests for nine o'clock, and now was well aware it was exactly twenty minutes after that time. It was unreasonable to expect Janet to be punctual when he knew her to be single-handed; for he had learnt poor Crissy's arm had swollen too frightfully to allow of her rising. What did a few moments more or

less matter when it gave him the bliss of standing close by Mina's side and gazing upon her imperial beauty in this halcyon light?

She wore a travelling gown of cloth, perfectly plain and unassuming; but its color was of a soft, delicate grey, and the rigid linen of the white collar at her throat was enhanced by being fastened by a single luminous diamond, which only rivalled, but did not surpass, the sparkling brightness of Mina's dark eyes. Sumptuously as he had often beheld her attired at the head of her father's dinner table, it seemed to him she had never seemed so fair and majestic a maiden as now.

Involuntarily he sighed. He was it to be hoped a poor Sheriff could aspire to this regal Queen of wealth and beauty?

Miss Mina detected that sigh with the prompt, outspoken naiveté which made her manner so irresistible.

"Prythee why so sad, Sir Sheriff?" she demanded.

He blushed like a boy. He murmured some incoherent apology about the force of a bad habit.

"Fie sir!" reproved Mina. "It would have been much prettier to declare you sighed because this is to be our last supper together! But no! you nineteenth century men are so prosaic you reserve all your poetic tastes for your cigars and your wine!"

"I would tell you the truth if I may," whispered the Sheriff. . . . What he would have said further is not to be recorded, for at this juncture the drawing-room door was opened.

"Supper is on the table, yer Honour," announced Janet. Poor Janet! She had undergone a hard day's work, divided between waiting on the prostrate Crissy and preparations for that most important meal now served.

No wonder there was just that little triumphant ring in her voice, conscious as she was of the faultlessly arranged table in the dining-room below; the perfection of the

CHAPTER IV.

boiled salmon, the roast fowls, the ham, the game pie, the cherry tart, the cakes, custards, jellies and fruits—not to mention the lobster—alas! for did ever lobster grace such an immaculate table in so wonderful and appalling a guise?

CHAPTER III.

To tell the truth, that unworthy fish had caused Janet more concern than all the other dishes put together. To begin with, he had given her chase twice round the kitchen floor ere he had allowed himself to be caught, while she had barely escaped more than one vicious bite whilst consigning him to the boiling pot; and then it had taken all her strength, overcome as she was by certain nervous qualms of conscience, to tie down the lid securely. But her distress culminated when at length the lobster issued from the pot satisfactorily “biled deid,” to use Janet’s own comment, “but the Lord preserve us! as reid’s bluid!” Janet sat down and fairly stared at the lobster in dismay. She had done something amiss in the cooking of it, that was certain. “The puir brite’s bluid had cam’ through an’ dyed the shell, mebbe. . . . The Sheriff said he liked tae see the shell, an’ it was tae be servit exactly as it was.” . . . So Janet soliloquised.

For five minutes she sat regarding her prey helplessly.

“I’ll gang up an’ spier at Crissy,” she said aloud. As fate would have it, Crissy lay fast asleep with the tears still wet upon her cheeks. Poor lass! sleep had brough relief from her pain at last. Janet could not find it in her motherly heart to wake her. Then as Janet slowly and thoughtfully descended the staircase a sudden happy inspiration came to her. She re-entered the kitchen briskly, and bringing forth the kousemaid’s box began selecting from its contents with a quiet smile of satisfaction on her comely face. “Nae dout, its the usual wey, though he micht hae tellt me . . . an’ its the wan wey I ken” she murmured.

The Sheriff had come down stairs with Mina on his arm in a whirl of delirious excitement; somehow her playful words, coquettish though they were, had raised an exultant throb of hope in his bosom, and did he not detect a little gleam of girlish pleasure in Mina’s own lovely eyes as they fell on the tastefully-spread board while she prettily accepted the chair her host placed for her on his right. Her father also, having penned that important mission to his broker, was he not surely smiling benignly on them both as he seated himself opposite?

The Sheriff said grace standing. Then a dire thing happened.

As he took his seat, his glance swept the table and remained rivetted on one of the meat dishes exactly before him, while a low exclamation, which sounded remarkably like “What the dickens”! escaped his lips.

There lay the lobster, recumbent in its bed of parsley, shining as the hide of a swarthy nigger, with claws and tail rearing like ebony satellites around its huge body. It was an awful moment. The Sheriff was conscious he did not flush, but that he turned deadly pale.

“Janet” he spoke then, “There’s something wrong here. Take this away.”

O! but sir—Janet ventured to expostulate on the strength of her achievement.

“Take it away” repeated the Sheriff.

His voice was the voice of the law, Janet obeyed indignantly, but with trepidation. Whereupon the Sheriff began to divide the salmon, chatting unconcernedly meanwhile, and as if totally unconscious of anything untoward having taken place. He had perfected that trick of good breeding at the bar.

But from Mina’s womanly heart he sought sympathy later on.

Perhaps it was Mina herself who provoked it. In fact that audacious damsel felt she owed a grudge against Janet for interrupting what promised to be an exceedingly interest-

ing tête-à-tête with her host in the drawing-room window previous to supper. Perhaps Mina had a lurking desire to learn what confession the Sheriff was then on the point of making.

"What a wonderful housekeeper you have in Janet" said Mina.

The clocks had struck midnight. For the last five minutes she and he had been walking together in silence up and down the deserted quay. It was all very quiet, very beautiful, and to the Sheriff, intensely sad. The moon had come out and thrown a silver haze over the placid bay. The dark hills loomed purple above it, and cast their fantastic reflections upon it. Alongside the jetty the fateful little steamer, on whose deck Jonathan Clarke now stood, haranguing the Captain. The bustle of departure would not begin yet for some four or five hours; but Mina preferred to come on board early and go to her berth at once. Up till this instant the Sheriff had been racking his brains how to lead towards that momentous question on his lips. He was far too earnest and nervous about its issue to plunge into it recklessly. Yet now that Mina had given him a cue, it was scarcely grateful or reasonable to show the irritation the Sheriff undoubtedly did.

"Are you laughing at me, Miss Mina?" he demanded. "To give Janet her due, until to-night I prided myself she was a person in a hundred."

"And has she not done her best to-night to prove that beyond doubt?" asked Mina, who was bent on mischief.

The Sheriff indulged in an exclamation of amusement.

"Well! considering she was responsible for the supper," he said, then broke off impatiently.

Why was he wasting the precious moments thus? He could not expect Jonathan Clarke to remain on that deck much longer.

"O!" said Mina demurely, "I think the supper was just too nice for anything."

"Especially the *unboiled* lobster," said the

Sheriff dryly; but a flush of pleasure had flooded his cheek.

Mina laughed, a sweet, bewitching, musical laugh, that stormed the Sheriff's heart anew.

"O!" she cried, "but it *was* boiled! Did you think it wasn't?"

"Then what the deuce was the matter with it?" asked he. He had a conviction somehow that he had been fooled.

Mina laughed again.

"That's just what I wanted to know, though I had a suspicion," was her placid reply, "so I waylaid Janet, whom I could see was sore on the subject. The sequel is very simple: poor Janet had no idea a lobster turned red with boiling. She said you told her to serve it exactly as it was when it came in live. Now guess what she did?"

"O! how can I guess?" groaned the Sheriff.

Here was a humiliating finale! All his domestic concerns laid bare to this piquante creature to whom the economy of keeping a cook-housekeeper only suggested a very amusing and novel arrangement. Here was good-bye to love and heiresses both: for in the Sheriff's honest heart love had weighed heaviest in the scale; and the exit of Mina meant the ending of all romance in his life.

"You can't guess?" Mina was saying, "then I won't tease you. I'll tell you right away. She *black-leaded* it!"

"What?" gasped the Sheriff.

To lend force to her words, Miss Mina had put one daintily gloved little hand on his arm, in her childlike, captivating way, and was looking in his eyes with merriment brimming over in her own.

Her lover's breath came fast. It was not at the absurdity of the intelligence which Mina's lovely lips imparted. It was the fascination of Mina's nearness; the hope that rose within him involuntarily before the spell of Mina's unfathomable glance.

"She put black-lead on it, tail and claws and all, and polished it with brushes like they do stoves!" repeated Mina, with that quaint

naïveté which simply scattered the Sheriff's sedate caution to the winds.

"Mina!" he cried, his voice divided betwixt laughter and anxiety, and clutching her little hand between both his big palms. "Won't you promise to come back and protect me from black-leaded lobsters in future?"

Then more coherently and very eloquently the Sheriff went on to plead what it was exactly that he desired of Miss Mina, until there was left no room for doubt in that maiden's mind.

But when at length the wooer's confidence failed somewhat and he began to depreciate his own unworthiness, because his listener had not yet uttered one word of encouragement or rebuke, Mina forgot her shyness in a sudden, sweet surrender.

"I was not just certain before whether my answer ought to be yes or no," she said demurely, "but I am quite sure now—for the lobster decided me."

And in the moonlight she lifted up her lips to be kissed.

MAVOR ALLEN.



THE LION.

"Then came hot July, boiling like to fire,
That all his garments he had cast away;
Upon a lion roaring yet with ire

He boldly rode, and made him to obey.
Behind his back a scythe, and by his side,

Under his belt he bore a sickle circling wide."

"BOILING like to fire" is certainly a very good simile for July, when the heat of Summer seems at its fiercest. There is, too, a great sense of sultriness and quietude

over Nature, as, with a few exceptions, all birds are silent, and one misses the joyful notes of the merry little songsters with which they herald the approach of Summer. This month was anciently dedicated to Jupiter, and represented as a strong, robust man (eating cherries or other red fruit), with swarthy, sunburnt face and hands; clothed in a jacket of light yellow colour, and garlanded with centanry or thyme. He carried a scythe on his shoulder, and was attended by a lion, in token that the sun enters that constellation on the 23rd of this month. The Saxons called the month *hen-monat*, or foliage month, and *hey-monat*, because they then mowed or made their hay-harvest.

In the Alban Kalender, July had thirty-six days; Romulus reduced it to thirty-one, Numa to thirty, but one more day, which it has retained since, was restored to it by Julius Cæsar.

According to the Almanac, July 3rd is the first of the Canicular, or Dog Days, but the ancient method of calculating them was from the heliacal rising of Sirius, the brightest star in the constellation called Canus Major; or when that star first appeared after being hid by the solar beams. If, however, this rule was still adhered to, the Dog Days would not take place in our latitude until nearly the end of August, and would consequently last until the end of September. It is contended that these days begin from the period in which the sun comes in conjunction with Sirius, and lasts for the space of time during which its rays obscure that star; in this case their commencement and termination are correctly placed in the almanacs of the present day. An ancient custom was to sacrifice a brown dog, as soon as Sirius could be beheld with the naked eye. This was in order to appease the wrath of the star, as they considered its appearance indicated extremely hot and sultry weather, that on the first day of its rising the sea boiled, wine turned sour, dogs grew mad, and man was afflicted with burning fevers and phrensies. During the Dog Days a festival was held at

Argos, called "Cynophorites," from four Greek words signifying "from killing dogs," it having been a practice to destroy every dog seen on that day.

On July 9th, the eve of the Great Fair in Wolverhampton, there used formerly to be a procession of men in armour, headed by a company of musicians, who played the "fair tune." These were followed by the Steward of the Deanery Manor, the peace officers, and most of the principal inhabitants. The origin of this ceremony dates back to the time when Wolverhampton was a great emporium of wool, and merchants from all parts of England flocked there. It is not unlikely that an armed force was necessary to keep peace and order during the fair, which lasted fourteen days. Since 1879 this custom of *walking the fair*, as it was called, has been discontinued.

The festival of St. Swithin, or Swithan, is still anxiously watched by many superstitious people, to prove the truth of the old adage:—

"St. Swithin's Day, if thou dost rain,
For forty days it will remain;
St. Swithin's Day, if thou be fair,
For forty days 'twill rain na mair."

St. Swithin was the child of noble Saxon parents, and early distinguished himself for literary acquirements. He received the holy order of priesthood from Helmstan, Bishop of Winchester, and by him appointed President of the Old Monastery in that city. Egbert, King of the West Saxons, entrusted to him the education of the good Prince Ethelwolf (father of Alfred the Great), and on his accession to the throne in A.D. 835, St. Swithin was made Sub-Deacon of Winchester and Lord Chancellor. On the death of Helmstan, he succeeded to the bishopric, and died A.D. 862. The origin of the old proverb is supposed to take its rise from the following circumstance:


It was St. Swithin's express desire that he should be buried in the open churchyard, and not in the chancel of the Minster, as was usual with other bishops, and his desire was complied with. Upon his canonization, the

monks resolved to remove his body into the choir, considering it a disgrace for the Saint to lie in a public cemetery, and this was to have been done with solemn procession on July 15th. It rained, however, so violently for forty days that their design had to be abandoned, and instead they erected a chapel over his grave. Many miracles are supposed to have been wrought there.

July 24th is the feast of St. Declan, first bishop of Ardmore, Waterford, supposed by tradition to have been the friend and companion of St. Patrick. In Ardmore churchyard a holy well still bears his name, but "St. Declan's stone" is on the beach, a large rock resting on two others, and supposed to be endued with miraculous powers for the healing of rheumatism.

St. James, the "Proto-Martyr of the Apostles," whose feast is held on July 25th, is the tutelar Saint of Spain, and was beheaded in the year 44. His relics are preserved with great reverence at Compostella, the capital of Galicia, and his festival was first instituted in 1809, since which time it has been retained by the English Church. On this day it was formerly the custom for apples to be blessed by the priests, and the manual of the Church of Sarum contains a special form for their benediction.

On July 27th the commemoration takes place of the "Seven Sleepers," whose history is recorded at length in the pages of the "Golden Legend," but space will not permit me to give more than an abridged version of it. These seven sleepers were Maximen, Malchus, Marcianus, Denys, John, Sempion, and Constantine, Christian men who refused to sacrifice to idols, according to the command of the Emperor Decius, A.D. 250. For their safety, they sold all their possessions and hid themselves in a cave, which the Emperor caused to be walled up with stones. The legend goes on to say that three hundred and seventy-two years after, a certain citizen of Ephesus, in building a dwelling for his herdsmen, had the cave opened, which awakened the Seven Sleepers, and they,



How the Wallflower
came first, and why
So called
Why this flower is now called so
List, sweet maids, and you shall know
Understand, this firstling was
Once a brisk and bony lass,
Kept as close as Lame was;
Who a sprightly springall loved,
And to have it fully proved,
Up she got upon a wall,
Tempting down to slide withal;
But the silken twist untied,
So she fell; and bruised, she died.
Love, in pity of the deed,
And her loving, luckless speed,
Turned her to this plant, we call
Now the Flower of the Wall

J. Mitchell.

supposing themselves to have been sleeping but one night, and feeling the pangs of hunger, sent Malchus into the city to buy food. As the coins he tendered were of such ancient date, suspicion was aroused, and he was taken before St. Martin, the bishop, and Antipater, the consul. At first his story was not believed, but upon his offering to conduct them to the cave to see his companions, the prelate and a great multitude of the citizens repaired to the mountain and saw the Christians seated in the cavern with "their vysages like unto roses flow'ring." Then the bishop sent for the Emperor Theodosius, who hurried from Constantinople to Ephesus,

whence the rulers of the city conducted him to the cavern. After the saints had embraced the Emperor, and been seen by all the people, they bowed their faces earthwards and gave up the ghost. The Emperor commanded gold and silver sepulchres to be made for their bodies, but they appeared to him in a vision, and begged to be left in the cavern. Theodosius then adorned that place with much gold and precious stones.

This is the legend of the "Seven Sleepers," according as it was believed in the Middle Ages.

GERTRUDE OLIVER-WILLIAMS.



COURTSHIP IN ROUMANIA.

A ROUMANIAN peasant is his own architect. He builds his house where he chooses and how he chooses, and is not very particular as to its outside appearance; but a great deal of trouble is expended upon the interior, which is comfortable and even pretty. The national love of colour leads the people to decorate their walls with pictures—usually sacred pictures—and to paint whatever can be painted. Even the baby's cradle and the handles of tools are painted in some gay device.

The baby's cradle is a long narrow oval box which the mother slings upon her back while working in the fields and vineyards, and when busy within doors she suspends it from the rafters.

The Roumanian housewife is a very busy woman. Her hands are never idle, for whenever she is not at work out of doors, she is spinning or dyeing or weaving the fine white linen or gay striped garments worn by her household. And besides this there is the duty of preparing wedding garments for her daughters, and if her family is large this is no light task.

She begins betimes. The little dark-eyed baby girl, swinging in her cocoon-like cradle, slumbers peacefully, unconscious of her destiny, while her mother sits spinning or weaving the linen and gay aprons required for her trousseau. Each article when complete is packed away in a deep wooden chest, which is well known to contain her dowry.

As soon as she is old enough, the girl herself helps to fill the chest, and by and by when she is seen wearing a head-dress embroidered with pearls and hung round with coins, the neighbours know that all is now ready and suitors may come forward if they choose.

The Roumanian peasant is not quite so praiseworthy as his woman-kind. He is by no means a model of industry, and is quite

content to look on while his wife or sister does the work.

He is a very picturesque individual. Handsome, graceful, musical, he must be an ideal sort of lover, and his talent for "dropping into poetry" when his feelings are moved, cannot fail to add charms to his wooing. But this dark-eyed young troubadour, while singing passionate songs to the lady of his heart, seems to have a keen eye to the main chance, which rather spoils the sentiment of the thing.

It is quite *en règle* for a suitor to ask permission to see his sweetheart's bridal chest, and if the contents do not satisfy him he may retire gracefully.

In some villages it is customary for the mothers to display their daughters' property during carnival week. At this time anyone may walk in and take a look round, note the quality of the goods and walk out again without giving offence.

The Roumanian peasant thinks much of dress. The quality of his linen and colouring of his cloth are to him matters of vast importance, and he would far rather go hungry than shabby. "The stomach has no mirror," is a proverb which illustrates this national trait. It is therefore natural—though not romantic—that a man should require some proof of his future wife's ability and resources before he marries her.

The great question of linen, moreover, touches not only the pride and prudence of a Roumanian, but it affects also his notions of revenge. If a girl jilts her lover, he is apt to relieve his feelings by depriving her of the power of spinning for a season.

If, therefore, a man finds that his crop of flax has been untimely cut down some moonlight night, his wrath will probably fall, in the first place, upon his daughter's head.

The Fergul de Fete, or Maidens' Market, is a custom now fast dying out. On the top of Mount Gaina, mothers and their marriageable daughters used to assemble on the 29th June—the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul. Each girl took with her the big painted chest

containing her trousseau, besides various articles of furniture, sheep, also poultry and beehives, each family vying with each other as to which could shew the richest appearance. Camping out thus upon the mountain top, the worthy father would sit at the door of his tent smoking a calm philosophic pipe and awaiting the arrival of suitors.

The young men also came with their fathers and mothers and a goodly show of domestic property.

The betrothals which took place here were celebrated with dancing and singing. It is said that this lovers' picnic was in fact only a ratification of engagements already well understood by the young people themselves, but not authorised by the parents.

This picturesque custom is already a thing of the past, yet courtship in Roumania is in no danger of becoming prosaic. The peasants have warm hearts, and such is their passionate love of the beautiful that even their faults are coloured by a tinge of romance.

may do very much the same thing; in literature it may make an author tedious or interesting, according to circumstance.

"Put yourself into your work, and your work will be good," say some advisers, "forget yourself, or your work will be tedious and irritating," say others, and both are right. It is entirely a matter of circumstance. If you are an interesting and well-loved writer, anything you have to say about yourself will be of interest. If you are an unknown beginner, and something interesting has happened to you, an account of it will be as interesting as the event—it will neither gain or lose in value by being related in the first person. If you are wise and witty, everything you say will be read with pleasure, whether it be about yourself or your neighbours, or any conceivable subject; the great thing is not to obtrude your ego at the wrong time.

But as a rule interesting people, wise people, or witty people, are not prone to talk about themselves. They have stories to tell, and tell them with so much vividness that they are unconscious of their own personality as they work—or they have articles to write on subjects concerning which they feel so strongly that their little individual feelings are lost in the rush of their beliefs or sympathies in something outside themselves.

It is because of this—because of the desire of the public to know all about interesting people, and because the qualities which make people interesting hinder them from talking spontaneously about themselves—that the "interview" was first invented. There are branches of journalism which are—as a well-known critic has phrased it—"delightful opportunities for discoursing on one's self." Interviewing is not one of them. An interviewer who talks about himself is like a painter who, having undertaken to produce a portrait of a given person, paints himself, brush in hand, in the foreground, and his subject dimly peering over his shoulder. This might, or might not, be an interesting picture—that would depend entirely on the

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM.

"I" AND EGOTISM.

IN discussing egotism, I am not, of course, discussing the private character of any of the class. With that I have nothing whatever to do, my business is simply to point out how this or that characteristic will affect a writer's chances of success as a journalist. Everyone, according to George Meredith, is more or less of an egotist; we differ only in degree of egotism, and, what counts for more in civilised life, in our power of restraining or disguising our egotism.

Egotism is, after all, but a form of the great instinct of self-preservation—it is one of the forces which keep us alive. The absence of it may make a hero, or a saint, or a nonentity. Occasionally the presence of it

personality of the artist, but it would certainly not be a portrait.

Young writers are often puzzled and disappointed when stories are returned to them simply because they are written in the first person. They know that some of the best books in the language are so written, and cannot understand the objection. The explanation is quite simple. To write about yourself is egotism; to get out of yourself and into the characters of which you are writing is almost genius. Browning possibly wrote less about himself than any author who ever lived; to use a paradox, he only wrote about himself when he was writing about his wife, and yet many of his poems are in the first person. They are so vivid, so life-like, that we cannot but believe in them. He has got out of himself and into the character he was depicting. Take, for instance, the poem on "A Tocata of Galuppi," in which he shows us the effect of the music on a man who was "never out of England." Take "Child Roland," or "The Patriot." Each of these poems speaks in the first person, but in none of the three does Browning talk about himself; he obliterates himself—loses himself entirely in his subject. This is what the literary egotist cannot do; instead of losing himself in his subject he colours his subject with himself.

If one considers prose, instances of my meaning are even more plentiful. Defoe wrote "Robinson Crusoe" in the first person, but he was not writing about himself—on the contrary, he was getting more completely out of himself than any writer has done before or since. Charles Kingsley's "I" in "Alton Locke" is not Charles Kingsley. Robert Louis Stevenson's "I" is not often Robert Louis Stevenson; if it were we should be glad, for an interesting incident would interest us the more if it happened to an interesting person.

But for the uninteresting person—that is to say, the beginner, who may, for all we know, be as interesting personally as Robert Louis Stevenson himself, but has not yet

proved the fact—the first person is a danger. If it means that he is merely writing about himself his work is likely to be irritating or tedious; if, on the contrary, it means that he has been able to forget himself entirely, and live for the time in the character of his hero, his work will be good, but must run the chance of refusal by busy editors who take fright at that "I," because it is so much more often the banner of egotism than the sign of self-effacement. Miss Kathleen Watson, whose book of *Short Stories* has just met with so much well-deserved praise, met with many and many a refusal on the grounds that "Stories in the first person were not popular." Yet Miss Watson had not written a word about herself. She is a happy young woman, just about to be married, but a keen imagination and wide sympathy made her able to feel and depict the innermost feelings of lonely and worn-out women so movingly that each one reads like a personal experience.

This, as has been said before, is almost genius, and so distinct from intrusion of one's self at the wrong time that I should strongly advise the class to get the book and study it carefully, remembering how distinct Miss Watson's own personality is from any of the personalities she expresses.

For next month's exercise let the class write in the first person the emotions of some imaginary man or woman on the Jubilee—anyone will do—an old soldier, who looks at it loyally; a bus driver, who looks at it from the point of view of interruption to the traffic; a person from the country come to see it; a quiet Londoner crowded out by the invasion from the country—in fact, anyone whatever except the writer herself.





It seems that there is some probability of Sir Walter Besant's scheme for the organisation of a bureau of communication between employer and employee taking definite shape. A meeting, presided over by Mrs. Creighton, to consider the project, was held in London in May.

The idea seems to be the formation of an institution which should be a store-house of information with regard to old and new employments, and where information regarding the necessary training and its cost could be obtained. The National Union of Women Workers has taken the matter in hand, and though previously the Union has been more or less of a women's annual parliament, it shows that it can act as well as talk. But to be really effectual the proposed bureau should amalgamate, or at least co-operate, with all the societies in existence dealing with the question of employment for women, either directly or indirectly.

Want of organisation has ever been the great and chief failing of women's societies and of women themselves. The various Gentlewomen's Employment Societies in London, Manchester, Liverpool, Dublin, and other large cities, undoubtedly do good work, but in almost every case they are crippled for want of funds, and their energies, revolving in a limited circle, are only able to cope in a minor degree with the pressing question of women's work.

With a view to the combination of all societies dealing with women and their labour, it would be interesting to learn what societies there are already existing which deal with this vital and important question. Besides the Gentlewomen's Employment Societies mentioned, there are the National

Union of Women Workers, a society with powers of organisation and adaptation as yet untried; the Women's Industrial Council, dealing mainly with philanthropic and social questions; the Stansfield Trust, which watches new legislation in the interests of women; the Women's Trade Union League, in London, with branches in the provinces; and various local unions, such as the Federation of Women Workers, in Manchester.

Apud of this subject, mention might be made of the tentative efforts made by the Liverpool Union of Women Workers and the Liverpool Women's Industrial Council to establish central offices in Liverpool, which should be the means of obtaining and supplying reliable information concerning women's work.

A meeting with this object was held last autumn at the Liverpool Town Hall, presided over by the Countess of Derby, in which the aims of the National Bureau of Women Workers were anticipated in a limited degree. Scotland is well supplied with Women's Unions and Leagues, the most important of which are incorporated in the National Federal Council of Scotland for Women's Trades.

Such societies are the Women's Co-operative Guild of Scotland, the Edinburgh Working Women's Federation, the Council of the Women's Protective and Provident League, Glasgow, and the Trades' Councils of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Greenock, &c., &c. The National Federal Council of Scotland, however, was formed to deal more particularly with the work of women whose labour comes under the regulations of the Factory and Workshops Act.

Dublin, too, possesses its Gentlewomen's Employment Society.

Whilst wishing all success to this scheme of Sir Walter Besant's, we trust that the promoters, though dealing mainly with women's employment and employers, will not ignore the less important, yet necessary, points of pensions, holidays, homes, and sick allowances for the women who, to the credit of their sex, are striving, in a selfish and over-crowded world, to maintain themselves honourably and fitly, and who, having spent the best years of their life in the burden and heat of the day, surely deserve to spend the evening of existence unharassed by the dreaded thought of what the morrow may bring in the shape of want and poverty.

Readers of *ATALANTA* will be familiar with Mrs. Orpen's clear vigorous style. In her last and most ambitious work, "*Perfection City*" (Hutchinson, 6s.), she has at once asserted her right to a position among the women novelists of the day. There has been no better skit upon the weakness of Utopian schemes for the regenerating of mankind and of the most altruistic resolutions when brought into contest with the emotions and passions of the mortal body. There have been many books with a similar theme, but most have failed from a lack of sustained interest. Mrs. Orpen has met this danger by weaving into the main motive sufficient love interest, and a leaven of stirring adventure such as the Wild West gives scope for.

Besides establishing a hotel at Oxford the Cheltenham Ladies College Settlement are formulating a scheme for establishing a company to build a house at Shoreditch. It was with this end in view that a meeting was recently held at the High School, Graham Street, Eaton Square, under the presidency of the Bishop of Stepney.

The Bishop spoke, in most appreciative terms, of the work done by women's settlements, and of the advantages accruing to the workers from their collegiate life, and the congenial companionship out of working hours. He congratulated the Cheltenham Guild on having sufficient funds to float a company.

The Vicar of Shoreditch and Canon Barnett, founder of Toynbee Hall, also gave their warm commendation.

One of the most remarkable works issued in recent times is the "*Woman's Bible*," the first part of which is issued by the Phoenix Press, London.

It consists of those texts and chapters of the Bible referring directly to women, and which have been subjected to complete revision. The subject was mooted six years ago, and is of American origin.

Some twenty-two ladies have taken part in this herculean labour of revision, under the leadership of Mrs. Elizabeth Cody Stanton. Whether the issue of this work is either a wise or commendable idea we do not presume to say. It is certainly decidedly unorthodox.

We are able this month to reproduce a portrait of Miss Daisy Richardson, who recently made a successful *début* at the Queen's Hall in a varied programme of recitations. Although still very young, Miss Richardson has had a distinguished career at the Guildhall Schools, and displays a versatility in her selection which is not often apparent in youth. Her humorous renderings of Dickens are among her more noteworthy efforts, but it is perhaps in strong dramatic power that she



most excels. Now that Miss Richardson has placed her foot upon the ladder of public favour, one may wish for her a high and permanent rung thereon.

The recent report issued by Westfield College shows a continuance of the success that has always marked its career. The result in the

London University examinations have been highly satisfactory, as the following facts evidence:

One Student, Miss P. M. Wood, has taken the M.A. Degree in the Classical Division; two have taken the B.A. Degree; six have passed the Intermediate Examination in Arts; one the Intermediate in Science; five have passed the Matriculation Examination; and three Students who intend to study Medicine passed in all the subjects required for the "Preliminary Scientific."

The appointments obtained by former Students include a First Mistress-ship at the Intermediate School at Tenby, Assistant Mistress-ships at the Princess Helena College, Ealing, at St. Leonard's School, St. Andrews, and, temporarily, at the Nottingham High School, and an appointment as Science Mistress in Toronto.

Miss Flora Shaw is the only lady on the staff of *The Times*, where she has been appointed editor of the South African News at a salary of £1,000 a year. Miss Shaw's example is an incentive to the large band of struggling girl-journalists.

The War Office has set the seal of its approval on the formation of a reserve of nurses to supplement the regular nursing service of the Army in case of war on any extended scale. This body is to be called the Army Nursing Reserve, and will consist of about a hundred nursing sisters. Salaries, when on duty, will be £40 per annum, while acting super-intendents will receive an additional £20.

The Swedish town of Nasso has a Woman's Fire Brigade of one hundred and fifty members. This fire brigade is, however, merely a feminine department of the brigade generally, the women's duties consisting of the filling and keeping full of four huge tubs in case of fire. The women stand in two long lines from the tubs to the lake, about three streets away, passing the buckets up full, and back empty.

A most interesting little book has been issued by Messrs. Asher and Co., entitled, "The Mirror of the Sinful Soul," a prose translation from the French of a poem by Queen Margaret of Navarre, made in 1544 by Queen Elizabeth at the age of eleven. The translation was made as a present to Queen Katherine Parr by her stepdaughter as a New Year's gift. The lovely little presentation volume in the Bodleian Library is in Elizabeth's own writing, and is supposed to have been bound by her also. The binding consists of blue silk, worked with gold and silver wire, and with the initials "K.P." in the centre.

Durham now possesses women students in the faculties of arts, music, literature, science, and medicine. Theology is debarred to them, also law,

as yet, the regulations providing that the final B.A. must have been passed before entering for a Law degree, and no woman has yet had time to complete her degree course in Arts.

A new club is the Victoria for Trained Nurses and Associated Workers, in Southampton-street, Strand. The club is charmingly furnished, and possesses an excellent lecture-room. The subscription is fixed at the moderate sum of a guinea a year for nurses, and two for associated members.

The Paris Exhibition of 1900 is to possess a Women's Art Building, which is to be devoted to the work of women, the idea for the erection of which arose with the Ladies' International Association.

VIVELAI (LOVE'S ROSES).

A CRIMSON rose it was, with breath so sweet,
I left its petals scattered at your feet,
For all my fingers tremulously beat
Upon its life, I fearing sad defeat,

For love will venture, e'en when love is shy.

"Without you life to me is incomplete"
I murmured, while, with movements deft and
fleet,

You rescued crimson petals, to secrete
Within your folded hands, and left your seat,
To own the love your lips could not deny.

"The red, red rose of love will never die,"
You said. It has not—yet those days *would*
fly;

A sad look swept across your brow—ah, why?
Because your trembling lips would say
"Good-bye"—

"Good-bye, my love, until once more we
meet."

A pale, pale rose you brought me with a sigh,
A parting gift, whose faded leaves would lie
Amid the treasures that could still supply
The fragrance of your touch. When none
are nigh

Those petals red and white my glances
greet.

MAY ROWLAND.

A TALANTA DEBATING CLUB.

"DO CHANGES IN FASHION AFFECT WOMEN MENTALLY AND MORALLY?"

THE effort to keep pace with the continual changes which fashion undergoes at the present day is bound to affect women mentally and morally—and not for good. Individuality of judgment, personal taste, and the innate perception of what is beautiful in form and colour stand in perpetual danger of being sacrificed to the stern decrees of Dame Fashion, whose commands not one woman in twenty dares deliberately to defy. You may train a girl for years in an Art school; teach her with patient care to see and love the wonderful beauty of the human form; cultivate her eye until the conjunction of incongruous colours jars upon her sense like the jangling of discordant notes—and to what purpose? Let but the fiat of her great slave mistress, *La Mode*, go forth, and Art's poor votary will crush her waist into a band many inches too small for it, will mince along on the tips of her toes, and smile on you with great complacency from beneath a hat whose glaring vulgarity would do credit to the taste of a South Sea Islander. Not only so, but the woman whose one ambition is to be in the van of Fashion's triumphal procession, must be often tempted to appropriate to her personal adornment money which ought to be devoted to the comfort and well-being of husband and children. And who can deny that the moral effect of fashion is bad, when it renders an otherwise tender-hearted woman deaf and callous to every appeal against the ruthless slaughter of bird or beast which is necessary to gratify some passing whim of the fickle goddess. To the earnest woman, on the other hand, whose aim in life is to accomplish something worth doing, and to the woman of straitened means, the far too frequent and meaningless changes of fashion are a perpetual worry and distraction.

JEANIE PEDDIE.

YES, decidedly. Fashion, roughly speaking, can be divided into three classes: fashions in dress, in manner, and in doings. Of fashions in dress, tight-lacing and disproportionately small feet are recognised evils; while fashions ungainly and inconvenient—the crinoline, dress-improver etc.—demoralise one's sense of the beautiful and becoming. Fashionable manners are to be depreciated; manner being an expression personal and natural to oneself. High hand-shaking, a short time fashionable among certain circles, was a slight to one's fellow-creatures, and a poor substitute for the time honoured custom of the "true, good-hearted shake." Courtesy is a Christian grace, but for those who have it not mutual deference as enjoined by society, is better than none at all. In fashionable doings the same may be said of almsgiving. Donations to the "deserving cause," subscribed because everybody else has, will profit, however slight the motive; but slumming and Sunday-school teaching undertaken because fashionable do harm. Customs tending to simplicity of life, and open-air exercise, cannot be too highly commended. Does not the present English girl owe her fine figure and bright face to a freer, more natural life; to outdoor games, sculling, and to the latest fashion of

bicycling? If mind and body be allied, vigorous intellects and strong, healthy minds will result. This being true of the present, future generations will not be far from the old Greek idea of excellence—a sound mind in a sound body. Fashions and the changes thereof have, especially for women, a subtle and far-reaching influence.

MAUD CECIL.

To a certain extent, every influence, conscious or unconscious, under which we come in this life, affects us for the better or worse. For the most part women are creatures of impulse, but these impulses in time solidify, and make up that complex thing called character. Fashion is undeniably a mighty power, for there is a natural tendency in most women to follow rather than lead. Only the few have power and strength of mind to be pioneers; the rest, like sheep, tread in their footsteps, more or less successfully. It is a matter of common observation that, however useless or even dangerous a thing may be, it only has to become fashionable to ensure its immediate adoption by all who can afford it, and many who cannot. It follows, then, that fashion must exercise a strong influence over most women. *Mentally*, it affects them for the worse—it stamps out originality with ruthless hand; it checks freedom of thought, and produces myriads of women all after the same pattern. On the women's *moral* nature, the effect is, outwardly at least, far less powerful. None but the very weak or unprincipled, would be led unresisting into anything, however fashionable, that was on the face of it, hurtful; thoughtlessness and carelessness more often lead astray in these matters than definite intention. The moral influence of fashion is slow, but none the less insidious, gradually leading women to ignore their power of choice between right and wrong, and to act like puppets, incapable of independent action.

ETHEL BLANCHE COLLINS.

MENTALLY, yes, and, to a very great extent, morally. For the veriest trifles have their influence upon mind and character, and fashion has ever been a most important factor for good or evil. Who can deny her power over women when we see daily how despotic is her rule? *Not* to obey the dictates of fashion is to be "eccentric," even "vulgar," for the civilisation of one age is the barbarity of another, and *vice versa*. What was permissible in the last century may be unpardonable now, merely because it has "gone out of fashion." Women are malleable creatures, and even changes in the fashion of *clothes* affect them obviously. Was it not the Vicar of Wakefield who commented on the enlivening influence of a new set of ribbons and the soberising effect of a sad-hued gown? Who does not know the feeling of modest retirement which we put on with our church-going bonnet, and the sensation of active independence there is in the wearing of a short skirt? The stately dignity that one feels must accompany a "train," the graceful indolence of the tea-gown,—all these, trifles in themselves, have their share in moulding the character of that complex being, woman. Certainly, if "manners makyth man," we may also affirm that "fashion makyth manners." Her vagaries become for the time our second nature, and there are few indeed amongst us who do not yield her an obedience as implicit as it is often wholly unconscious.

MARY A. E. TINDALL.

ATALANTA CLUB.

Subject for July: "Is a long life desirable?" Papers must not exceed *two hundred and fifty words*, and must be sent in on or before July 25th. Prizes of five shillings will be awarded to each of the four best papers, which will be published in the body of the Magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

Describe an imaginary incident of a sat-out waltz. Analyse the character of George II. Write 20 lines of original verse in the metre of Locksley Hall. The subject for the School of Journalism will be found on page 595. All papers must be sent in on or before July 25th. Essays must not exceed 500 words. Members may only enter for one of these subjects. Full rules for the above will be found among the advertising pages at the end of this number.

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (JUNE).

I.

1. "Rest." John Charles Earle. 2. "Silence." Joseph Ellis. 3. "Sunset." Henry Ellison.

II.

1. "To pill and poll" means to *extort*.
2. The "canon" was the part of a horse's bit let into the mouth.

III.

1. "An exhortation." Wilfrid S. Blunt.
2. "Emigration." William Michael Rossetti.

IV.

1. "Dirge." Thomas Lovell Beddoes.
2. "Dreamland." Christina Rossetti.
3. "A false step." Elizabeth Barret Browning.

V.

1. The Blacksmith Gao so successfully resisted the tyrant Zohak, that his apron became the royal standard of Persia.
2. A Moorish instrument of music.

VI.

1. Herrick. 2. Herrick.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR JULY.

I.

Gives authors of quotations

1. "Is this the sky, and this the very earth
I had such pleasure in when I was young."
2. "How many months, how many a weary year
My soul hath stood upon that brink of days,
Straining dim eyes into the treacherous haze
For signs of life's beginning."
3. Sweet we will hold to Love for Love's sweet
sake,
Seeing Love to us must be his own reward;
Haply we shall not find our task too hard,
Nor suffer from intolerable ache.

II.

And the following

1. "The voice which I did more esteem
Than music in her sweetest key;
Those eyes which unto me did seem
More comfortable than the day;"
2. "Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like season'd timber, never gives;
But though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives."

III.

1. What is the meaning of the quotation "Dutch-built the true legitimate?"
2. Explain what is meant by "Psaphon's birds?"

IV.

Find these quotations

1. "Not I myself know all my love for thee;
How should I reach so far, who cannot weigh
To-morrow's dower by gage of yesterday?"
2. "She loves him; for her infinite soul is Love,
And he her lode-star."

V.

1. What is the meaning of the line "That blooms on a leafless bough?"
2. And this "The loveliest amber, that ever the sorrowing sea-bird has wept?"

VI.

Find these quotations—

1. "Dry those fair, those crystal eyes
Which like growing fountains rise
To drown their banks."
2. "Great monarch of the word, from whose
power springs
The potency and power of kings,
Record the royal woe my suffering sings;"
3. "Dark is the sky that overhangs my soul,
The mists are thick that through the valley
roll."



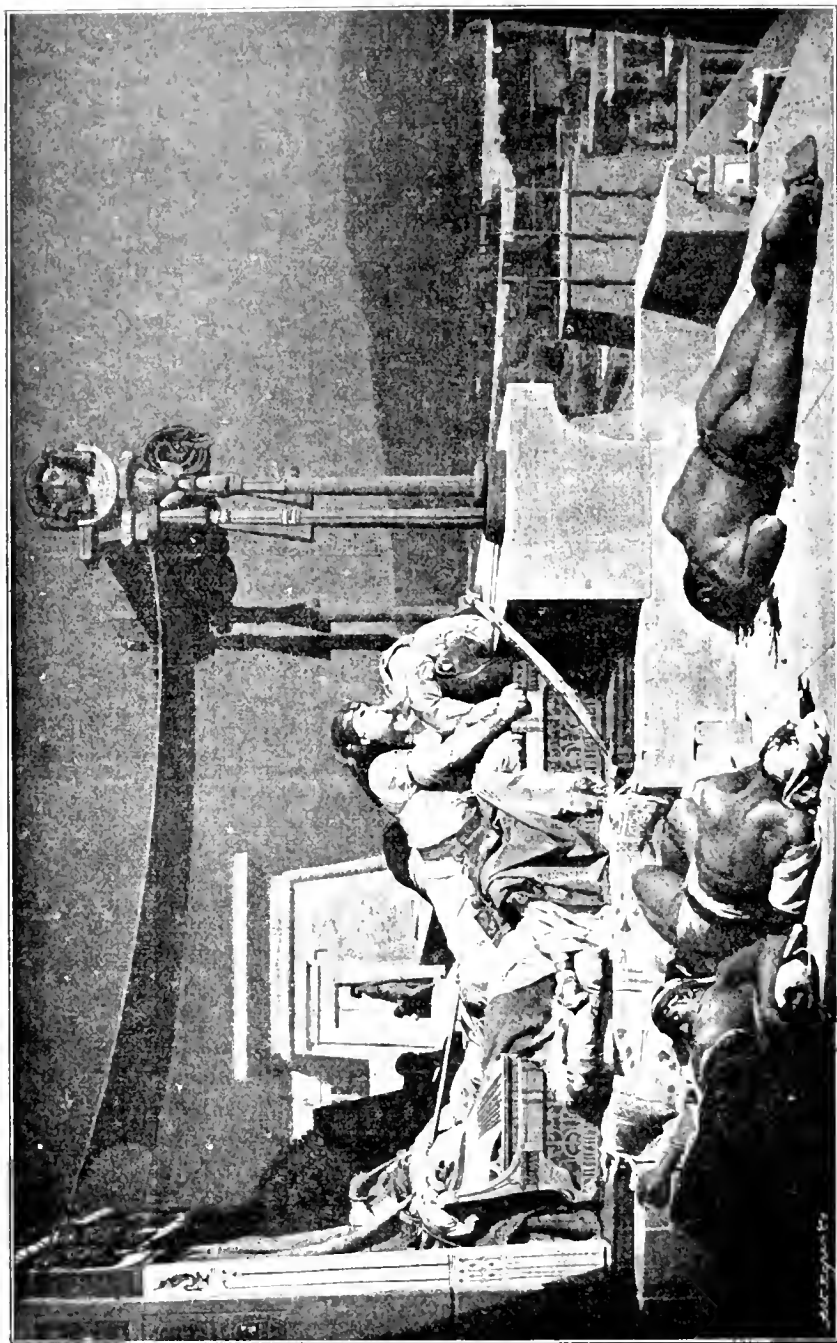
A JAPANESE SONG.

" You were long away, my heart " ;
 Said the West Wind to the Rose
" Hard it was so long to part,
 Yet—the Anise grows
Evergreen the whole year long
 Snow and sunshine through :
So I wooed her. But my song
 Thought of *you*."

" I was long away," the Rose
 To her fickle harper said :
" Evergreen the Anise grows
 When the Rose is dead.
I forgot you too, my rover,
 For a season's span ;
And I took another lover—
 Ema San * ! "

NORA HOPPER.

Death.



Le capitaine Gudin

LES PORTEURS DE MANVAISES NOUVELLES.

7 - 10 - 12 - 14

SWEETHEARTS AND FRIENDS.

CHAPTER XI.

" But there's a tree of many a one,
A single field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something which is gone :
The pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat :
Whither is fled the visionary gleam,
Where is it now, the glory and the dream ? "

THE romantic episode in the Riviera, flashing unexpectedly into the murkiness of chill January days, passed as quickly away, the glory and the loveliness swallowed in the dead prose of ordinary life. The Immaculate, who had then dreamed of no such bright possibilities, felt, on returning to England in the bitter wind of a black March day, that orange groves, palms and myrtles, their foliage stirred by the breath of young romance, their branches swept by garments of a being of ethereal loveliness, were but dreams.

Lettice had already declined from an ideal to an erring creature, with frailties for perfections. Compassion had succeeded his early reverence for her ; the selfishness, sharp temper, and flippancy so manifest in her, were but partly atoned for by youth and faulty education. Still, he could mould his ideal wife from this plastic young material ; Love would chisel something lovely from such unsullied youth. Yet he was sad, as he leant over the boat's side and saw the cold grey Dover cliffs. Hapless Immaculate !

Lettice would have been surprised, even amused, at the concern her small frailties caused. A being so charming had a right to frailties, she thought. That this unreasonable man would think of her except with the blindest devotion, or that she had, or ever would have, duties towards him, never struck her. The Immaculate naturally fell in love with her at first sight, because men always did ; as he was agreeable and eligible, she accepted him. It was high time to marry at nineteen ; rejecting suitors, she reflected, with

a prudence for which her adorer did not give her credit, is all very well in early youth, while whole ranks of men surrender at one glance, but on the verge of old maidhood no discreet girl should reject a good offer.

But she reckoned without her host in assuming that her will was to regulate Lester's actions, as she found before the brief Riviera days had passed.

Rocca Vecchia is a mediæval stronghold on a bare mountain crag, within a drive of Col Aprico. There the Villa Dole' Acqua circle picnicked one day. Angela having done her best to fall down an oubliette in the gloomy ruin, the Immaculate, catching her just as she was disappearing, had forbidden her to leave his hand again. Lettice and Amy wished to climb an eminence crowned with pines, whence an extensive view, including the hill-tops of Corsica, lying like purple gems in the sea, was visible. Having reached this desired spot, the two girls, with their knight and his two pets, sat beneath the sighing pines, where it was pleasant and airy on this sunny March afternoon. Gum oozed from the bark of the wind-rocked pines, filling the air with healthy fragrance ; down through the dazzle of sunlight, over rounded, verdured hills, out upon a sea in which every imaginable jewel seemed slowly dissolving in a flux of liquid gold, it was delightful to look ; a barren castled crag on the right, a wood of chestnut and oak flushed with russet buds, on the left, limestone mountains rising precipitously behind them, completed the picture. All this beauty and repose made them silent, even Angela and the dog.

" Now I know what those sails remind me off," Lettice exclaimed, starting from a reverie, " the *Lebenschiffe* at Carrie's wedding."

Some boats were tacking, so that the sails, broadside to the west, would be sheets of glory ; then, at right angles to the first tack, they were shadowy grey.

The Immaculate remembered the occasion. " It was our first meeting," he said, " you were then a child with golden hair."

"That stupid man with his walnut-shell ships! And that boy whose candle went out! He died before the year was over," Lettice said.

"There must have been some devilry in it. How little I then guessed that I was standing by my fate," said the Immaculate tenderly.

"Ah! but our ships didn't sail together," Lettice objected; "yours ran after Amy's. Do you remember, Amy?"

Amy had disappeared with the child; they rose and followed her.

As they were descending the hill-side, their conversation fell on Angela. "It is cruel to spoil her so, Vivian," Lettice said, "she will have to go out in the world and earn her bread. How will she be fitted for roughing it?"

Lester's face changed. "Why should she rough it?" he asked.

"She has nothing," Lettice replied, a little frightened.

"She has me."

"And at your death?"

"She will not be forgotten."

"Adopted children are a mistake," she said.

"I am sorry you think so. I hoped that you would have been a mother to this child," he added. "The adoption was fully discussed at the time, dearest. Your father approved. I asked him to make it plain to you."

She replied that he had no right to burden her with such a responsibility; and he was silent, regretting that he had not better succeeded in making her understand what she was doing at the time of the engagement.

"In accepting each other, surely we accepted each other's responsibilities," he added, after a time. Lettice replied, with flushed cheeks and cold voice, that she could not and would not be bothered with other people's children. At this stage they joined the rest of the party and returned to Col Aprico, the Immaculate in a high state of misery. It was hard upon Lettice, who seemed not to have understood the position,

which he had so carefully explained to her parents along with other matter-of-fact details. He blamed himself for expecting so much of her. But what could he do at this eleventh hour? It was his last evening, spent at Villa Dole' Acqua, where supper was always a trial to his feelings. Fräulein Anna's knife was constantly disappearing between her charming lips; Frau von Stein too ostentatiously enjoyed her food and too frequently used both knife and fork to give point to her conversation; the German-Swiss girl used hers as signalling instruments,—von Wilden!—and de Rolleau!—but people's feelings must be respected. At all events, supper at Villa Dole' Acqua was a penance hardly counterbalanced by the presence of Lettice. Yet, had she not been present, the pain would have been less; for these sins against refinement were so many insults to that pure pearl of womanly excellence, a view of the question that would have intensely amused the fair lady herself.

To-night Lettice was pleased to manifest her displeasure by a haughty and chilling manner, receiving all his attempts at conversation with crushing monosyllables. Her monosyllables were a gift entirely her own; with them she could assent, dissent, kindle to enthusiasm, chill to despair, enchant with rapture, or crush with disdain; compared with the heavy ordnance of conversation, these monosyllables were as a needle-gun of delicate precision and long range. The needle-gun soon silenced the Immaculate's fire, reducing him to deepest gloom. But the table penance once over, he forgot everything save the necessity of loving Lettice and being a little loved in return. Therefore, when they left the dining-room, he took a shawl from the vestibule, folded her in it and drew her silently, irresistibly, into the verandah, using sufficient gentle force to take away the young lady's breath—figuratively, not literally—and to impress her with a wholesome conviction that he was not to be trifled with. But a silken thread was not for her; she must master or be mastered. Foolish

youth! drawing her hand through his arm, he made a beautiful tender little apology for his rough words at Rocca Vecchia, and immediately lost his temporary ascendancy over her, winning scorn and wrath instead.

She shed a few tears; he thought himself a brute. He succeeded, however, in drying the tears, and in riveting his bonds more firmly than ever. Then he spoke gently of his promise to the dead, sacred, impossible to break, a promise given when he was unfettered by other ties. He knew that he asked and expected too much of her, perhaps he ought not to have asked it; but it was now impossible to go back. "Dearest," he added in his velvety voice, "help me bear this burden. It is very sweet to me. It may be even sweeter to you one day. The child is dearer to me than anyone on earth—except yourself. She will wind herself round *your* heart one day."

"And that is why I hate the brat," the fair damsel reflected; but she only said that she would think it over.

It was enough for the Immaculate that Lettice was gracious again and assented to tender nothings he said about their approaching parting and future meeting, and listened contentedly to other agreeable trifles. What could be more delightful? Young lovers strolling among moon-lit orange and myrtle trees in an Italian garden, within sound of the sea. The very birds nestled among the foliage might have envied the young human pair. Von Wilden, looking at the moon, an eclipse of which was due, caught sight of them and murmured some of Rückert's love-lyrics instead of measuring the eclipse, which was just beginning, thinking possibly that love-making was more amusing than astronomy. Frau von Stein, peeping through the half-drawn curtains, was quite sure of it. What did the Frau care for the moon? She cared much for humanity, also for German propriety, which exacted a watchful gaze on the most intimate moments of a *Brantpaar* such as now moved in the soft odours and tender moonlight of that orange garden.

When the Immaculate bid his friends at Col Aprico good-bye, affectionately kissed by Frau von Stein—but not a second time by Von Wilden and de Rolleau—receiving a cordial hand-clasp from Amy Langton, with a frank, "See you again soon," and a polyglot valediction from the remaining ladies, he thought that friendship was a beautiful and pleasant thing, pleasanter and far more restful than love. Recreant knight! Heretical Immaculate! No longer can he be called perfect.

CHAPTER XII.

"A little child, a limber elf,
Singing and dancing to itself,
A fairy thing with red, round cheeks,
That always asks and never seeks,
Makes such a vision to the sight
As fills a father's eyes with light."

On a warm, still June afternoon, Lester and his little ward, just set down from a hansom, and followed, of course, by Nep, were walking slowly on the hot flags, now beginning to cool in the shade, by the trees clustering round the little Church of the Angels.

"I wish you had a half-holiday every day," Angela said, in her best English. "I want to see ze beasts again, and give buns to ze bears."

"We can go on some Sunday. But would you not rather see your friend Miss Amy than the lions and tigers?"

"I sink I would yike hose at one time."

The relation between these two human beings was daily becoming closer and more delightful. As Angela absolutely declined to stay away from Lester at Croft Hall, for the present they occupied some sunny bright rooms near one of the Parks, where the Immaculate spent much of his time. It was pleasanter than the solitude of chambers. He wrote and Angela played with her dolls in the same room, each having come to a mutual understanding of the wants of the other. The child took an interest beyond

her years in all he did. When he went to the House of Commons, she understood that he was busy persuading people to build better houses for poor people, to prevent women and little children from working too hard, and to see to the defences of Great Britain.

Soon after her arrival in England, Angela had contrived to fall ill, of an illness which nearly proved fatal. All through one night, when she was said to be sinking, Lester held the moaning, half-conscious child, who turned and clung to him through it all, in his arms. Not till then did he imagine how much a child can be loved, though it is scarcely necessary to observe that the Immaculate, perfect at all points, proved himself a first-rate father and a matchless sick nurse. As for Miss Angela, she could not have hit upon a better way of endearing herself to him than this little excursion deathwards; it was a stroke of genius. The closer she twined round his heart, the more surprising Lettice's aversion for her appeared to Lester.

At first he waited for an invitation, which never came, to take the child to see Lettice. Then he asked leave to bring her, when Lettice was anything but gracious. Once Mrs. Cecil Langton openly said it was a pity the child had not been removed by her illness; whereupon Lettice laughed her musical laugh, and observed that she had yet to run the gauntlet of half-a-dozen infantile maladies. At which observation, Lester's face changed; he said nothing, but thought much. In proportion as Lettice was jealous of the child, she grew exacting to him; absolute homage was what she demanded. Blind Immaculate! no suspicion of her jealousy crossed his mind. But once, when severely scolded for not appearing at Notting Hill in the height of Angela's illness, he was provoked into saying that a child's life was more important than a woman's whim.

"Has it come to this?" cried Lettice, bursting into tears. "Men always change,

but I did not think you would cease to love me so soon."

"And I did not think," retorted the Immaculate (whose virtues appear to be on the decline), for he was too indignant to be touched even by tears, "that a woman could be so selfish as to grudge anything to a dying child."

"You knew I was selfish, and yet you loved me," she replied, with tearful reproach.

"It is because I love you so truly, that I want you to be unselfish," he returned, gently.

"If you really loved me you would be content with me. If I were unselfish and prim and good, I should be somebody else. Why did you choose me if you wanted somebody else? You had better have left me alone."

"Do you really think so?" he asked, with a very grave face. "Is it your wish that we should part?"

Lettice was startled. She was not quite as hard as she seemed. Annoyed at his absence for the sake of a sick child, she had not realised, though she had been told, that the little thing was in danger. In reproaching him for his pre-occupation, she expected passionate excuses for his negligence instead of grave rebuke for her selfishness. She wanted blind adoration; it was painful to find that a man could love her and still retain possession of his senses; still more painful to discover that he was ready to take her wild words in earnest. A pitiful look came over her sweet face; she turned to him with a gesture that went to his heart. "Vivian," she cried, "you are not going to leave me?"

This brought him penitent to her feet. He had been a brute, everything that was bad. She, startled from her self-absorption by fear of losing him, was sweeter to him than she had ever been; glamour once more fell upon him; how had he been found worthy of the love of so exquisite, so peerless a being? Yet she was a constant tribulation, perplexity, and cross in his life; still, before the poetical episode at Col Aprico, life had been

more blessed than he knew, or than it would ever be again.

“Glück ohne Ruh
Liebe, bist du.”

said Goëthe, who ought to have known, considering his experience.

It was then that Lester formed the conclusion that Lettice and Angela could not live under one roof; yet he was bound to both. To keep Angela would be to cherish a source of constant dissension; to send her away would be cruel, the child was too young to be given to strangers; besides, he had the usual masculine prejudice against boarding-schools. Revolving these thoughts as they walked, he looked down upon the upturned face of his little ward, and met her innocent smile of perfect childish confidence. He pressed the tiny hand in his own, thinking that if, instead of duty, it were choice, the exquisite grace and capricious beauty of Lettice would have small chance against Angela's innocent loving confidence. Perhaps poor Lettice's jealousy was justified after all.

“Not at home,” said the maid who opened the door of No. 9, with a smile for Angela.

“No one at home?” he asked.

“Miss Grace is at home, but she sees no one.”

“But Amy, where is Amy?” asked the child, eagerly.

“Miss Amy is engaged, Miss.”

“Say her Angela is come,” said the child, bounding into the hall in perfect certainty of a welcome.”

“Come back, Carina,” the Immaculate said in Italian, “you are rude.”

“The drawing-room is empty, please go in, sir,” the maid said. “Miss Amy is in the study. When she hears who it is, she may like to see Miss Wingrove,” so he followed the child into the familiar, friendly room, in which he had not been for ages.

It is not to be supposed that a being so beautiful, so pleasant, and so courteous as the Immaculate was anything but a social success. He went much into society before his engagement, and as much as circum-

stances would permit afterwards. But the Marshalls were not in any set he cared for. His people had, of course, called on Lettice; Lady Evelyn Lester, an aunt, had done more, but with little success; she could not understand being patronised and snubbed by her nephew's *fiancée*, an underbred girl of nineteen.

“Poor Vivian,” his family said, when the engagement was alluded to. “One would have credited him with better taste.”

Protected by the “Not at home,” Amy had chosen to work in the pleasant drawing-room by the open window. While writing there, the short, imperious rap of the post-man had been heard; she had run out into the hall, taken a letter from the box, and read it more than once. When Angela and Lester came in, she was sitting upon a low seat, with the letter in her hand, and an expression of supreme emotion in her face. Raising her eyes at their entrance, she regarded them silently with a moved and pre-occupied face. Sitting thus, in a thoughtful posture, every curve and line of her figure expressing the emotion visible in her face, afternoon sun lighting her bright hair, the simple folds of her dress falling gracefully round her, she was an impressive and unforgettable picture. To the Immaculate it was a new revelation of Amy, filling him with some awe and much trust and admiration. “Our prophetess has grown into a beauty,” he thought, while some seconds passed, during which she held both from addressing her by that look in which they had no part; then her face changed; Angela sprang to her neck, the Immaculate apologised for the intrusion. Then the child chatted gaily in her own Italian, pulling Amy's face down to her and making conversation impossible for some minutes; she was perfectly dressed in white, with all proper finishings and refinements, pretty still, but slighter and taller, having shot up since her illness, and grown pale and large eyed.

“Do you think she is quite strong?” her guardian asked, taking the small wrist in his fingers and saying that it grew daily more

slender. He was comforted by the assurance that she was only out-growing the chubbiness of infancy, and showed every appearance of improving health. Presently he burst out in French with, "Somebody dislikes children, especially this one."

"Somebody is only a child herself. A time will come when she will turn to them."

"So that one need only wait?"

"Quite so. Besides, where there is real and true affection, dislikes and different tastes are trifles."

"Real and true affection"; he looked at the unconscious child in silence for a few moments, till Amy was seized with a fear lest further revelations should come. "I must say one thing," she added quickly; "Somebody is the only creature who should be aware of these things."

"I acknowledge the rebuke." Yet he had not told her, and had scarcely dared tell himself, the real trouble. But he was hurt, he felt, with the unreason of his sex, that she had lost interest in him and repulsed his confidence.

"Do you remember a Kempis?" she said gently. "Nothing is hard to Love."

He remembered a Kempis, also Coleridge,

"And then he knew it was a fiend,
That miserable knight."

"After all," he said "There is something better than Love, Duty."

"Something of importance has happened to you to-day," the Immaculate said presently.

"Yes," she replied colouring, "of great importance."

He rose, went to a table to look at some flowers. "She is going to be married," he thought. "May I congratulate you?" he asked, returning after a short silence with the utmost propriety and equal to all conventionalities, as usual.

"It certainly is a subject for congratulation, Mr. Lester. The struggles, uncertainties and terrors of my profession are at an end."

"Ah!" he thought most mournfully, "she has come to her senses; the true woman is awake—too late."

"I am so glad for my mother's sake. You know our narrow circumstances; I shall be able to help her substantially now. I have told no one yet. The engagement is but just completed."

"Thank you," the Immaculate returned with a dejected air, "I am *so* glad to be the first to hear it." Yet he looked singularly wretched.

"Only a woman," she continued, "a woman who has gone through such struggles as I have, can quite sympathise with me. Men take these things as matters of course; to women it is a great thing, a new life."

"Surely it is new life to men, perhaps even more so than to women," he objected with great humility. "Well, I congratulate you with all my heart. I cordially hope that you will be happy."

"I shall be, I must be, happy. Filled with such duties and responsibilities, life cannot fail to be happy. I am very happy already."

The Immaculate's beautiful face was grey and anxious; he wondered why he felt so wretched. Was it because he knew that no one was good enough for her? "Is it—pardon my curiosity, dear prophetess—" he asked, "has it been long on the—ah—under consideration?"

"About three months—not longer."

"Ah!" Many obscure things now became clear to the Immaculate, one of them, that he had made a serious mistake three months ago, when he might have won a prize—but this he quickly banished. "I thought," he remarked weakly, "I thought there was a something. You will not," he added in a choking voice, "you will not forget old friends, I hope?" Poor faultless knight! His beautiful dark eyes were very wistful as he looked up.

"Mr. Lester! Do you know me so little as to ask? I never forget friends, old or new, do I Angela?" taking the little girl, who had been looking at pictures till she was tired, on her knee.

Façon de parler, Miss Amy. One asks

because one wants to be re-assured. When does—h'm!—it take place?"

"Almost immediately. In a week or two, I suppose," she replied carelessly. "But tell me of yourself. What you are writing—thinking—doing. We hear whispers of a Private Bill."

"You are too good: my affairs will wait," he returned, with deeper and deeper melancholy. "Who—who is he? Do I know him?"

"Of whom do you speak? Do you mean the Secretary? Because she's a woman. They are all women."

The Immaculate's brain turned like a humming-top. "Who are all women?" he gasped faintly: "there must be a man somewhere, even in a marriage."

"But what marriage are you thinking of, Mr. Lester?" Amy cried in desperation. "Are you alluding to your own?"

"I was speaking of yours."

"But why should you begin to think of such an improbability all at once, *à propos* of nothing? I spoke of a Private Bill."

"I was thinking of your future husband."

"As if I should marry a Private Bill," she replied with acerbity. "If you think I am going to be married, Mr. Lester, you are mistaken. I was referring to my engagement as assistant surgeon to the New Hospital for Women in Great Windsor-street."

"Well! I *am*—" cried the Immaculate, with a shout of laughter.

CHAPTER XIII.

Oh, and is all forgot now,

Our childhood's innocence,

Our school-day loves, the friendship,

No change could recompense?

It was now five years since Amy Langton had been banished from her mother's house by the fraternal decree, five industrious, eventful years, during which she had scarcely even been in the neighbourhood. It was impossible to re-visit the scene of old troubles and joys without some elation. In the meantime she had reached the ambitious summit,

which in old days had seemed but a far-off dream, she had assaulted and carried the out-works of the medical profession. To her family she was still "that Amy," that inconvenient and uncomfortable member of the family, whose proceedings were such an annoyance to right-minded people.

On her return to England in April, when she was admitted to the old home in Angel Road, she had set to work in good earnest to obtain professional employment. A plate inscribed "Amy Langton, M.D., Consulting Physician.—Hours 9 till 5," had been set up in a house in town, in which she had a small consulting room on a third floor. Here she found ample leisure for study, especially of chimneys, but few patients and fewer fees. But she lived on hope and went to and from Angel Road, with a cheerful spirit and undaunted courage, until the want of rent for the room and the near prospect of the hospital appointment led her, in the beginning of June, to remove her plate and her presence.

Grace had permanently left Angel Road, which she had not re-visited since leaving it to become a novice, until her return from the Riviera, when she spent a few days there. Before taking final vows she had been visited by her mother, her sisters, and Cecil: Cecil had not opposed her desire after the first: he thought that, if Grace did not intend to marry, her best plan was to immure herself respectably for life. He therefore bid his sister farewell with gentlemanly composure, reflecting, as he handed his weeping mother into a cab, "At least one of them is off our hands."

Not that his sister's care and maintenance in any way depended upon him, each having a tiny private fortune: being "on his hands" consisted apparently in sharing his mother's roof with him,—for this occurred before his marriage—and being ready to perform those thousand and one little services sisters are so ready to give and brothers often so careless in receiving. Julius had been less tolerant. He disliked

conventual life, looking at sisterhoods, from a medical point of view, as hot-beds of hysteria and mental and bodily weakness. He therefore did his best to dissuade his sister from the religious life; but the more he argued the more firmly was Grace set upon it, her principal aim being to mortify her "vile body." Still Julius considered Grace's errors respectable; he had never been in open rupture with her as with Amy. Julius was known to be the writer of that clever pamphlet on London water, illustrated by cuts of creatures revealed by the microscope in those crystal deeps. He had just begun that series of papers on the perils of adulterated food and the diseases hidden in milk, which resulted in the starvation of many worthy people, who, finding danger lurking in every drop of water, milk, and in nearly all foods, lived upon eggs, oysters and salads, with Rhine wine imported straight from the growers. His article upon the methods of cooking wines for export and that on sewage contamination of oysters and watercress, deprived those unfortunates of their last support, and resulted in their untimely death.

"And yet," Mrs. Langton would plaintively say in moments of confidence to her stepson, "though all pretty, your sisters never marry, and the youngest is twenty. Of course, Stephen, no one expects Grace to marry: nuns never do. At Coldwell they see nobody but their assistant priest, who could not possibly marry them all: and their priest, Grace tells me, is married. Nor could one expect anything from Amy, although, at one time, I had hopes—but he is engaged to Lettice Marshall. But I did think that the others would do something."

"Do something?" echoed Stephen; "I thought you disliked——"

"In the marriage way, Stephen. They are both handsome girls and not at all clever, and they are not even too religious; indeed I often have to insist upon Georgie's going to church on Sundays. One of them plays, the other sings; they know nothing and

have no opinions whatever. I do all I can for them. They make their own dresses at home; we save in every way to go into society. 'Do marry those girls, mother,' Cecil says, or Julius begins, 'Mother, when *are* those girls going to marry?'—Imagine! four unmarried daughters! I try to bear it, Stephen; no doubt it is a just punishment for my sins. They say it is catching if one goes off."

"Well," he returned, "we have had one marriage. Let us hope it may be catching."

"Cecil's marriage is out of the family," said the much-enduring mother. "For a son is not married from one's house, nor does his wife provide for him. Everything is falling, and what we should do without your generous help, Stephen, I cannot think."

"I wish it were more," the head of the family replied, "but of course I must think of my children. Steenie will be going to Cambridge; Jack's Eton bills are not small—Well! you know all the expensive items. And I hope your dividends will go up again before long."

It was after this conversation that Mrs. Langton returned to Angel Road to receive the announcement of Amy's appointment in the following terms:—"It is the crown of success. Labour and competence without struggle. All my patients will be women; I don't like attending men. Mrs. St. Luke would never have accepted me, for all the governors and trustees in the world, if she had not been convinced of my capacity. Mother, dear, *do* be glad. You need not leave this house. I can guarantee the rent for you now," she added.

Yet Mrs. Langton wept on hearing of the appointment, because, she said, it seemed to make the thing more real. Her child was now fairly committed to this career; there was no longer any chance of her withdrawing in disgust. "She will be shut up in a horrid place full of sick people and smelling of oiled silk and drugs, and never see any society," she observed to Georgie in con-

fidence. "Just as she is beginning to be really pretty and take an interest in her dress!"

"It is a pity, mother, but it might be worse, and she will be at least provided for," replied Georgie. "No one could possibly dream of marrying so clever and strange a girl as Amy. What can she talk of? What can she do? She has no time to learn tennis"—then new; golf was then scarcely known out of Scotland, ladies' cricket and bicycling still in the dim future—"She reads no novels but old ones"—Ibsen was then unknown, Zola young—"She dislikes gossip; she won't listen to funny stories and jokes. She is always so particular and prim with men. She *can't* flirt. She knows nothing of the peerage or society scandals, or the private life of literary people and actresses. And of china and *chiffons* she knows nothing and cares less. What is the use of alluding to jokes out of the last burlesque to her? She objects to talk of *causes célèbres*, especially divorce cases. As for music, she didn't even know that Usignuola had run through two husbands' fortunes and been divorced. Now, mother, what *could* a man say to Amy? Nature intended her for an old maid. Let us be thankful that she is so respectably shelved."

"You talk very fast, my dear," Mrs. Langton observed, "and I am never quite sure whether you are in earnest or jest." She admitted that her child's pecuniary help was timely, though it was painful to take it from a daughter.

"But you don't consider the pleasure and pride of helping, mother," Amy replied.

The first thought of Amy's heart was to fly to Louisa Stanley, and discuss—for of course she knew—the delightful news. She watched Louisa as we watch some rare and exquisite blossom, knowing it must soon fall, trying to prolong its frail existence to the utmost. Louisa had inspired the enthusiasm of her life and fallen a martyr to it herself; she had fed her with bright hopes and noble dreams; she had given her a home and

affection when her own cast her out. If Jonathan's love was passing the love of women, many women's friendship far over passes the love of men.

Louisa's rooms were usually full of girl-students; to-day she was found alone, busy drawing diagrams for her student friends.

"So glad you came. I've been longing to talk it over," was Louisa's first word.

"Pray talk," said Amy, wondering why Louisa's delicate face became crimson. But Louisa went on drawing in silence, with a changing colour. "I wonder how you will like it?" she asked after a time.

"How can you wonder? The conclusion is foregone."

"I hope you will like *him*, Amy," with another wave of colour and a furtive glance.

"But who am I to like?"

"Well!—the—happy events."

"Happy, indeed. The star of the Langtons certainly is in the ascendant. My sister Georgie and Charlie Lovelace are finally engaged and the wedding day fixed, after five years of flirtation—philandering. Algernon writes to tell us that he has found a gold mine, after all his failures and losses. Julius has an appointment that has never been given to a man of his years before——"

"And Amy has an appointment that has never been given to a woman of her's before. All is *coulour de rose*. I am glad Georgie's marriage is settled. I had heard that Mr. Lovelace was engaged to Lettice, and poor Mr. Lester left to wear the willow. I am sorry for our Bayard, Amy. He will never be happy with Lettice."

"Oh! marriage is such a lottery, Louie. What a mercy that you and I have never been tempted to draw a number!"

"The numbers are not *all* blanks."

"Nearly all. Every day I am more convinced that advanced women must not marry. How many a fine capacity has been smothered in domestic frivolities! With advancing years I approach your views of celibacy."

"My views!"

"Have you forgotten your order of secular celibates devoted to science?"

"I remember talking a good deal of nonsense at odd times, Amy," replied Louisa with a quaint little smile.

"But this was one of the few sensible things that you ever said. Just as a woman's mind is developing and she is making progress, some horrid man comes and she throws everything to the winds for him. In four years she can talk of nothing but babies, servants, and clothes."

"No, no. Look at Mrs. St. Luke."

An exception. Let us found a society for the suppression of matrimony among the —!"

"The Blues?"

"Yes, the Blues."

"Impossible."

"Why?" asked Amy, half laughing, half serious, and expecting some merry quip from her friend.

"Because Edward Granam and I are going to be married next month," replied Louisa, dropping her pencil and looking up. "There; the murder is out," she added, laughing.

"You going to be married!" cried Amy,

"How dare you?"

"What woman dare I dare," she replied

"I am my own mistress."

"And therefore you are going to take a master. I could not have thought this of you."

Tears came into Amy's eyes when she remembered how short Louisa's time was, and that another hand than her's would smooth the rough path to the grave for her — or make it rougher.

"Well!" she sighed at last. "I suppose it must be borne. This flood-tide of marrying must at last subside. As I am already engaged for two weddings next month, perhaps you will fix a blank day for yours."

"You may see another before long," said Louisa, laughing.

"What! are there any more fools left?"

"Only Lettice and our Bayard."

Amy rose and went to the window, where she plucked a few geranium leaves and looked out.

"Lettice is so young," she said. But she was thinking of her two grand friendships, both broken.

CHAPTER XIV.

"To the lists his steed might bear him;

He might cry to the knights amain,

'Let him for the fight prepare him,

Who charges my love with a stain!'

"Oh! then they would all be silent,

But a cry from his soul would dart,

Alas! he must plunge his lance-point

In his own accusing heart." — *Heine*.

It was mid-July, London was hot and dusty, trees in the parks were dusty and dark, the very sunshine seemed jaded. The prose of existence weighed upon the Immaculate; his life was like a London July; Lettice took no interest in anything that he cared for; he could not be interested in anything that pleased her. Literature, art, public life, the relation of men to each other and to the Unseen; none of these things ever concerned Lettice. Save her beauty and grace, there was not a breath of poetry about her, all was flattest prose. Her lover longed amid the prosaic turmoil of town and toil for the green pastures and still waters of poetry, the poetry of life.

While he walked and mused, a face flashed out from the crowd of carriages, a face full of beauty and intellect, young, smiling, a poem in itself. It was Amy Langton's; she, too, was tired and hot, and thinking of green pastures. The air instantly lost its heaviness, sunbeams their lurid tinge, the jaded crowd jostling on the hot pavement, the wheels and hoofs clattering on the road, were purged of prose for the Immaculate. It was like the song of a wood-bird on the outskirts of a dreary town.

Later in the day he was dropped from a hansom at the Marshalls' house at Notting Hill, where he found the drawing-room empty, though the dinner hour was striking.

An envelope lay on the writing table, folded in the newest style and addressed in Lettice's large girlish writing to Mrs. Fitzwilliam; it had been placed there, on purpose to attract his attention, by the wilful beauty, who resented his earnest and repeated desire that she should give up this fascinating but rowdy woman, of whom he had only that day heard contemptuous mention at a club. Some music stood on the open piano, a duet for baritone and soprano voices. It was marked C. Lovelace, and some mischievous hand had scribbled beneath "and Letty" in pencil. Yet Lettice did not care to sing duets with her betrothed. Among the few books in the room were some he had given her with an affectionate request to read them for his sake. The leaves were uncut, except where he had marked passages for her attention. The fly-leaf of one bore a caricature of himself in wig and gown. Lettice's needle-work lay just as she had thrown it aside. He liked her to work, it was a domestic, feminine occupation. How wonderful and graceful was the way in which the delicate fingers wielded the tiny tool! He took the work in his own hands and tried clumsily to hold the little shining needle in his fingers, which seemed so awkward and immense in contrast with her's.

Then Lettice appeared, in white muslin and fresh moss-roses, all smiles and graciousness. She had refrained from entering the drawing-room earlier for three reasons: first, because she wished to avoid a lecture, as she styled her lover's innocent endeavours to improve her mind; secondly, because she wanted him to have full leisure to observe her note to Mrs. Fitzwilliam and the music that testified to a recent duet with Mr. Lovelace; and, thirdly, because she believed waiting to be a wholesome discipline for lovers and good training for the severer restraints of married life. Her favourite theory that coolness on one side kindles love on the other, had proved its truth in an unexpected manner. Lester, outwardly as devoted now as ever,

had lost that enthusiasm which she confessed had bored her, with the result that he acquired a new worth in her eyes.

To-night she was dressed to please his taste; she had even a rose-bud for him, which he accepted with due gratitude but no emotion. He looked reflectively upon the exquisite face, so near the flower she was fastening in his coat and so like it, and received her bewitching up-turned glance with no more emotion than if she had been a tailor measuring him. He was wondering how many such smiles and roses had been bestowed upon Mr. Lovelace. So grave and intent was the look in his dark eyes that poor little rose-leaf Letty was frightened.

"What is the matter?" she asked. "If you look so grave, I shall think that you are cross because I kept you waiting."

"Not cross, dearest," he replied, taking the hand that was still busy with the coat, "I was thinking——"

But Letty's father coming in just then, the Immaculate's thoughts were untold. Major Marshall received him with cordiality, proud of the sight of his daughter's frail and delicate beauty, set off by the tall, knightly looking man with dark eyes and irreproachable bearing. That he had been in the army and still retained his brevet rank, was all known to the world of this gentleman; but everybody acknowledged that, whatever her faults, Mrs. Marshall was a long-suffering woman. The Major now had business in the City, about which only one thing was certain, namely, that its profits were uncertain. The Marshall brothers were fast young men, one in the army, one an emigrant, the youngest in a Government office, and living under the paternal roof. This young man followed his father, and was soon followed by his sister, Mrs. Cecil Langton, who was on a long visit with her children.

After the uncomfortable dinner, "long and famel," as Major Marshall said, Lester found Lettice in a low chair, reading in the fading light. When he appeared, the book vanished among the folds of her dress.

"Spoiling your eyes, Lettice?" he asked, drawing a chair to her side. "A pity to spoil anything so bright. You might find them useful some day."

"They were only intended for ornament," she replied, with the gay insolence that became her so well. "I never mean them to be useful."

"Not even for wool-work? And novels?"

"Making out that I read nothing but novels!" she pouted.

"Do you ever read anything more solid, dearest?"

"Now you are going to lecture me in words a foot long. Do you take me for the House of Commons?"

"You don't look it," he replied with admiration: "more like a House of Uncommons?"

"I like you when you talk nonsense," she returned.

"Thank you, dearest; then I'll never talk sense. But promise me that you will look into the books I sent you. You gave me an inch, so I take an ell."

"I have read every word of them, you teasing man! But I am not going to stand an examination upon them," she pouted.

"Oh!" he said. He looked grave and hurt.

Then lights were brought in and he had to leave his chair, which was in the way. It was some minutes before he resumed his seat and conversation. "I found something about Balzac the other day and cut it out for you," he began. "It will explain why I wanted you not to read that novel. If you really wish to study his works, you will find 'Eugenie Grandet' pleasanter and more suitable."

"Oh! I don't want any more French; I am reading such a pretty thing of *Loulou's*; the heroine is like a serpent."

"Do you like *Loulou's* works, Lettice?"

"Better than French. *Vif*, you have frightened me from French," she replied with a frank smile.

How lovely she was in her soft cloudy muslin, her pretty white hands clasped in her

lap, her graceful head resting against the high-backed chair, with the lamplight falling on the golden hair and fresh rosebuds. But why should the Immaculate sigh and say, "Poor child"?

Then Arthur Marshall lounged in, wrapped in cigar-smoke. "Are you people going to sit looking at each other all the evening?" he asked, subsiding into an easy chair and yawning. His mother roused herself from a gentle doze and asked him if he would like a rubber with his father.

"The governor is in his den," he replied. "I say, Letty, you might amuse a fellow."

Then Lester, who had had enough of being amused, perhaps, suggested music, and Lettice rose and went to the piano, her dress sweeping from her chair to his feet something that he picked up and tossed savagely away. It was Balzac's "*Scènes de la Vie Parisienne*."

During the music the Major came in; brandy in his eye, brandy in his talk, brandy in his gait. His wife looked keenly at him; at last Lester understood the family phrase, 'the governor is in his den.' He looked from the father to the fragile creature at the piano with an extreme pang of pity.

While he was getting his hat and coat in the hall, a white figure flashed down the stair and beckoned him into the dining-room. It was Lettice, drooping, penitent, lovely. She looked down for a few moments and then faltered, "I didn't read much."

He did not reply; her humiliation pained him too much.

"You are angry," she said, leaning her face against him to hide her tears. He put his arm round the pretty, frail thing, but said nothing.

"You are so high-flown, *Vif*. Men never believe women. Mama always fibs to papa, and Carrie to Cecil, and nobody minds. I wish you would not take things so seriously."

"I can't help it," he gasped; then they stood in silence a moment, she with her flushed wet face and tumbled golden hair pressed against him, he a little stiff, almost

as if he shrank from her. At last she lifted her face with something of her old winning confidence: "You still love me?" she asked, tenderly.

He wished her good-night, and went. Lettice threw herself on a sofa and sobbed in her childish way. "The angrier he is, the more I care for him," she thought.

"And this," he reflected, as he drove away, "is the creature I worshipped." Passion rarely turns to indifference, the rebound is generally hate. Presently he dismissed his cab and strolled down to the Embankment, whither he often repaired, sometimes to study the wrecked humanity there, sometimes to meditate.

A flowing river impresses the imagination, disposing to the contemplation of the abstract; it makes the tangled web of individual joys and cares vanish, and that varied, many-hued tissue, the great vesture of human life, appear, woven at the loom of time by Fate, Fortune and natural law, guided by an unknown purpose to an unknown end. But the Thames—the Thames, which has seen the tragedy and comedy of so many centuries!—so much human emotion has mingled with its waters all through the ages, the wonder is that it does not arise, itself a soul, and tell its secrets and mysteries to the listening air. Glory of stars above, dark mystery of waters below, light airs in young trees, chimes floating from the clock-tower visible above the majestic pile along the waterside: all soothed, all tended to that intense species of *rêverie* in which thought is too keen and rapid for words.

Presently, while pacing beneath the trees, after a cigar and much thought, Lester became interested in a man sitting on a bench in an attitude of extreme dejection, and sat by him, arousing no responsive interest. It was a sodden, nerveless, hopeless face, that changed not at all when speaking in reply to the Immaculate's civil remarks. No; he was not going home; he had no home, no friends, nothing. He was a French polisher once.

"When did you eat last?" Lester asked, pained by the utter gloom of the dull voice and duller eyes.

"Don't know. I know I was jolly drunk last night. No baccy, thankie. I haven't so much as a pipe."

"Here is one," said the Immaculate, after a short, severe struggle with his feelings, because it was a black and beautiful briar-wood pipe, the result of time and judicious smoking. "Cheer up! Tell me what you are going to do. Here's a light," striking a match.

The man lighted the pipe and smoked; his face changed. "You ain't a Holy Joe," he said, turning to look at him, "I'm blowed if you aint a bloomin' young toff."

"A man," he replied, gently, "like all men, knowing something of misery. Tell me all about yours."

"I worked for a large firm, good wages, nice little 'ome—nice young wife—she *died*! One little gell left, three year old. Grew up pretty, and a style with her, I tell yeh, a style. She—she went—away."

"Ah—ah!" Lester's hand went out with his heart and his voice, and gripped the workman's firmly and warmly. "You lost heart," he said, "cared for nothing, took to drink. No wonder!—no wonder! I have a little girl, too: she is five."

"You'll come home with me and have supper," he said later, after hearing a long, long story. "Then you shall have a ticket for a lodging. To-morrow we'll see about work."

Of what passed between the sodden, starved tramp and the bloomin' young toff there is no record. But it is known that some months later a French polisher showed his mate a blackened briar-wood pipe he did not use.

"He'd a polished it hisself," he said, looking tenderly at it, "but 'twas the 'and-grip as fetched me."

[To be continued.]

A N EGYPTIAN FAIR.

*By the Author of
"A Black Jewel,"
"A Cairo Scandal," &c.*

ALL through the length and breadth of Egypt a certain saint, whose name is barely known in England, is held in veneration as second only to the Virgin Mary herself. In every church you enter you find a picture of a young and, so far as the artist can represent her, beautiful woman, surrounded by forty smaller pictures, in the same frame, each of a woman in the habit of a nun. If the church is one of the two or three occasionally visited by English and American tourists, you will probably be told that they represent St. Catherine. If you say in the language of the people, "Indeed: who told you it was St. Catherine?" the old priest will smile deprecatingly, and reply: "Well, of course, as your excellency knows, it is *really* Sitte Dimiana." But the tourists, who are vaguely conscious that there is an Egyptian saint called St. Catherine, and have not heard of any other, tell him that it is St. Catherine, and he is too polite to contradict them. Who St. Catherine may be he has no idea; probably it is the English way of pronouncing Dimiana. For St. Catherine of Alexandria is unknown in Egypt, if she ever existed; she has no honour in her own country. But there is hardly a Christian in the country who cannot tell you the story of Sitte Dimiana, and with wonderfully little variation in the different villages and towns.

Sitte does not mean saint. The Egyptians, though they have a word for saint, borrowed from the Greek, never use it as a prefix. For saints of the sterner sex they use the Chaldean word Mar, which signifies Lord. Before a consonant, or if the personal pronoun is used, this becomes Mari, *i.e.*, Mari Girghis, which we render in English St. George. In the same way Sitt, or almost invariably Sitte, sounding the final e, which

means lady, or my lady, is prefixed to the names of female saints.

I have written Dimiana as it is pronounced, the "i" short as in Jim, the "a" long as in Juliana; but I have little doubt that it is the feminine of Damian, as we generally write in the west the name of the Egyptian physician and saint who is so inseparably connected with his twin brother Cosmas. What the Coptic root may be I do not know, but I have been told by Egyptians that it is the same as that which forms the original of the word we now call Damiatta.

The father of Dimiana, so runs the story, was the governor of one of the Egyptian provinces in the reign of Diocletian. He was a Christian, and so much respected both in his own province and at Court that Diocletian by no means desired to treat him with the rigour prescribed by the edict which ushered in the ten years' Reign of Terror, which is still remembered with horror by the Egyptians. So indelibly was the memory of this terrible time impressed on the national mind that the mark of it lies now, like a great dividing gulf, across their national life. They date their present era, as we all know, from the first year of the reign of Diocletian, and they call it, with sad significance, "the era of martyrs."

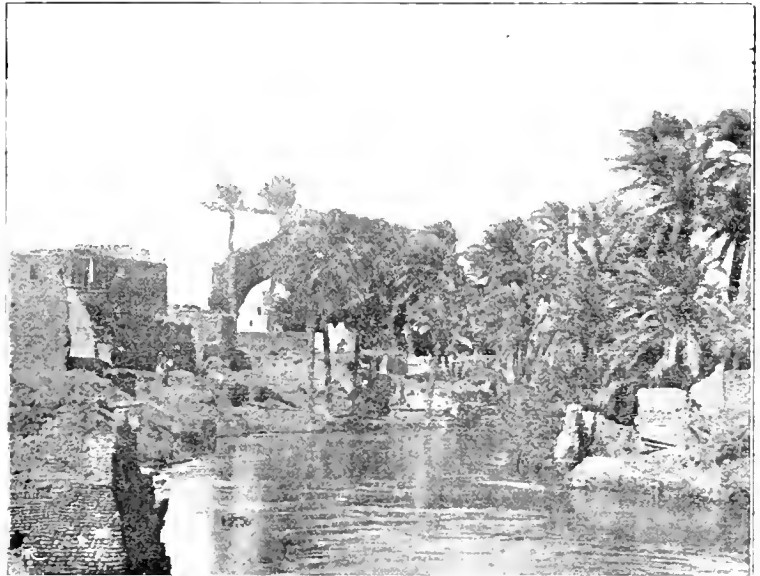
I have not been able to discover the name of Dimiana's father. It is lost in what the Egyptians consider his only title of honour—his fatherhood of the young and beautiful girl who from her earliest years he had dedicated to the service of God, and for whom he had founded a convent. Her maidens became her nuns, and others joined her, till the number had reached to forty. It is said by some versions of the legend that she was only fifteen when she became abbess of the convent. She was already there when the edict of 303 was published, and not long after news was brought to her that the Emperor had offered her father to continue in his government and all his other honours, even to worship in his own house as it pleased

him, so long as he allowed it to be publicly announced that he had submitted to the Imperial edict and embraced the religion of the State. A governor, in such a case, would be able to make the edict practically a dead letter in his province, and it was reported to Dimiana that her father intended to accept the offer of the Emperor. She sent, or went, it is not clear which, to entreat her father not so to imperil his immortal welfare, and by her tears and prayers she prevailed with him to refuse all compromise and to offer himself as a martyr for the faith. But an able and honest governor in a distant and important province of the empire was not so easily replaced, and Diocletian, instead of putting the father to death, turned all his fury on the daughter. A troop was despatched at once to the convent, and not only Dimiana, but all her nuns with her, were given the alternative of renouncing their faith, and submitting to the will of the Emperor, or suffering death by torture. The nuns responded to the call of their dauntless young abbess, and not one failed her. The whole forty endured tortures without flinching; they died together, and were buried in one grave.

That grave is still revered, not only by the faithful few—now about a fifth of the whole population—who from generation to generation have endured oppression, obloquy, and often savage persecution, sooner than forsake the faith of their fathers, but by all true Egyptians, whether Mohammedan or Christian. A convent has existed from time immemorial on the same site, and to this convent once a

year a vast procession of pilgrims—men, women, and children—wend their way from all parts of Egypt. The sanctity of her shrine was so great that a vigil properly kept there would expel the most obstinate devil, and people afflicted with fits or epilepsy were brought from long distances to be cured. But the greatest miracle was one which was spoken of under the breath, as it were, and not to be mentioned at all except to the faithful—the Shadow of Sitte Dimiana—which yearly, at the same day and hour, appeared to her believing devotees.

I had heard for years of Sitte Dimiana, and this year I made up my mind that I would myself undertake the pilgrimage. A convent of nuns I knew would receive me with ready courtesy and hospitality, and I quite prepared to rough it. It was too far to go there and back in the day from Cairo, even with the present extension of railways in the Delta. But I was kindly welcomed to Mansourah, the nearest large town, and when I arrived there found that the French Judge and his daughter, besides my hosts themselves and a young Egyptian lawyer, who



AN EGYPTIAN SCENE.

had performed this pilgrimage more than once himself, would accompany us. Mr. Sideros (Siderius?) had already written to the Bishop of the Province to inform him that our distinguished party intended to visit the fair, and had received for answer that the Bishop himself would be unable to be present this year as business had called him to Palestine (a part of which is included in his diocese), but that his representative would be delighted to receive us, and that all the Bishop's own rooms in the convent would be reserved for us.

One of the members of the Judicial Bench at Mansourah was going on leave, and the night of my arrival at Mansourah we went to a dinner given by the French Judge in his honour, at which I was most hospitably welcomed, and where the conversation—in a mixture of languages—turned chiefly on what we expected to see at the fair. I was anxious to obtain more information about the celebrated Shadow, but all I could learn was that for the last six years it had ceased to appear, and that the miraculous cures were therefore also in abeyance. We started at noon the next day, taking with us pillows, rugs, and saddles, in addition to our night gear, so that one compartment was filled with our luggage and servant, as well as another with our party of seven, for an American lady from the Mansourah mission had also joined us.

Wherever people travel the weather is "exceptional," and our pilgrimage to Dimiana was no exception to the rule. The train had hardly moved away from Mansourah when it began to rain hard, although it was the middle of an Egyptian May and a chilly rain was flagrantly out of place. We knew that we should have to spend an hour and a half or more at a little wayside station half-way between Mansourah and Bilkaas; and we had made quite a nice little plan for that halt. We would get out and have a picnic tea in the shade of a palm grove, and then we would explore the village for Christian remains. We arrived at that

station in such pelting rain that the surroundings were almost invisible, but we made out a cluster of desolate mud huts, which were apparently rapidly resolving themselves into the primitive element, some extremely white children, who were taking a shower bath in front of their homes, and that was all. No palm-groves, apparently no cultivation of any kind, though this could not have been the fact. A thin, shivering lad came along the train looking for me, and explained that Sheikh Mena (a Mohammedan Copt, who was constructing a new railway from Bilkaas, and whom I knew in Cairo) had sent him to wait upon the Sitte. He thankfully took refuge in the luggage carriage with our servant, and meanwhile, Miss L. —, the British Judge's sister, managed, somehow, to produce hot coffee in a saucepan, which we much appreciated. A knot of labourers, who were waiting with some empty trucks, came up and interrogated our servants to know what these incomprehensible Frangis were doing here; but we won their fervent gratitude and approval by the distribution of some cigarettes. Then we fell into conversation again about the vanished Shadow, and here I met with another instance of the difficulty one has in getting the Egyptians to talk frankly of their beliefs to us for fear of ridicule. They know we call ourselves Christians, but then, they argue, so do the Americans, who are manifestly unbelievers (in priests, churches, bishops, sacraments, and most things that the Egyptian mind regards as essential to the Christian religion), who knows if the English, who speak the same language, are any better? Mr. Sideros had often been asked about the Shadow before, and had affected to know and care nothing about it; but now that he heard us seriously discussing the nature of an apparition which we seemed prepared to accept in good faith, he dropped his mask of indifference and suddenly informed us that he had seen it himself some years before, and firmly believed in it. We eagerly asked him to tell us what he had seen.

It then appeared that the vision appeared in an ancient crypt or disused chapel, now nearly underground, and lighted only by one opening high up in the wall. At a certain hour on the day of the festival a bright light shone on the blank wall of this chapel, and the Shadow passed across. But a Shadow of what? we asked.

"They say," answered Mr. Sideros, manifestly becoming uncomfortable again, "that it is the Shadow of Sitte Dimiana and the Archangel Michael."

"But why," I asked. Why the Archangel Michael?

Here the British Judge, who had been dozing, woke with a start, and looked across at me. His Christian name was Michael, but France hastened to explain to his colleague that it was the Archangel we had called upon. Meanwhile Mr. Sideros was explaining to me that *he* did not commit himself to the statement that it was Sitte Dimiana or the Archangel; all he would say was that he had certainly, at the appointed hour, seen the shadow of a woman pass across the brilliant light, followed by "men and women riding on asses." No one knew, he added, who, or how many, would appear, but always some shadows passed—who he would not himself pretend to say.

It seemed to me most probable, and the rest of the company agreed with me, that the builders of the convent centuries ago must either by accident or design have built a sort of natural camera obscura, so contrived that when the sun was exactly in the right position a reflection was thrown upon the wall

of the people passing outside. But then, we naturally asked ourselves, why should the apparition have ceased for the last six or seven years to appear. Further enquiry cleared up this difficulty at any rate. I had observed that when the English settled themselves in Egypt, and seemed likely to stay there some years, the Christian Egyptians, or, to give them their ordinary misnomer, the Copts, had taken advantage of their immunity from oppression to re-build their ancient, and, in many cases, almost ruinous churches in every direction. Much as the antiquarian must regret this, he would at least have acknowledged that it was in many cases necessary if the churches were to continue at all; and it is only fair to the Egyptians to say that, whatever Vandalisms they have been guilty of, they may favourably compare with ourselves when we began to restore our churches in the present century. Still we must all regret the disappearance of curious structural relics all over Egypt in the last ten years, and among them has been the building which caused the Shadow of Sitte Dimiana. The whole convent was renovated,



BEDOUIN CAMP

white-washed, and in great part re-built. Even the shrine did not escape. They pulled down the outer covering, and began to prise up an enormous stone, which was said to mark the spot where the forty-one corpses had been buried together, when a jet of water, "white as milk," said one informant, sprung out with such force that the workmen were knocked down and blinded. (The one who held the lever at the moment is said to have remained blind some time till the gracious lady had pity on him, and healed him.) This was taken as the clearest possible intimation that Sitte Dimiana was angry at the proposed disturbance of her grave, the great stone was hastily fixed in its place again, though with some difficulty, and an enormous circular tomb of white plaster built over it. It is with this abortive attempt to open Sitte Dimiana's tomb that the Egyptians connect the disappearance of their yearly apparition, as they fear Sitte Dimiana has not yet entirely forgiven their well-meant intrusion, though they hope that she will do so some day.

Fortunately for us, the rain had ceased when we arrived at Bilkaas, where we were cordially welcomed by Sheikh Mena, in his flowing robes. We left him and Mr. Sideros to bargain with the villagers for donkeys and mules wherewith to transport ourselves and our baggage to the fair, and took refuge in the upper part of the little Greek hotel, which appeared to be entirely occupied by Sheikh Mena and his attendants, though, of course, not a soul was allowed to mount the outside staircase or remain in the vicinity of the English ladies as soon as they had ushered us upstairs. Bilkaas is a fairly picturesque village, with palms above the low mud houses, and a little river running by. Externally the church was more imposing than usual; instead of being concealed as much as possible by houses built against it, it stood out boldly by itself on a rising ground, with even a suggestion of cloisters round it. I wanted to go and see it, but the day was already far spent, and it seemed doubtful if we should reach the

convent before night-fall; so we obediently mounted our ragged steeds, who had evidently been hard worked in the service of pilgrims, and filed out of Bilkaas through the mud alleys which serve for streets.

Our way for some time lay along the bank of the little river, and was not calculated to re-assure nervous riders. The green bank went steeply down into the water on one side, and on the other several feet into the fields, and the path on the top of this ridge was of the narrowest. On an ordinary occasion this would not have mattered much, but the track was full of pilgrims going and returning, most of them on foot, but many of them on horses, mules, or asses. Sometimes, indeed, we met a whole drove of donkeys returning empty for fresh burdens, and these were the most troublesome of all. The only safety against being jostled uncereemoniously into the river was to allow our boys to push the donkeys right and left by main force. None of them, I am thankful to say, went into the river on our account, but several were plumped down on the crops on the other side of the bank, and left to scramble up again as they could. Everyone was very good-natured, however, and before very long we left the bank of the river and turned off across a barren and apparently boundless plain. It was not a sand desert, for the soil had once been very fertile, and would be again under favourable circumstances. But for some centuries now it has been little cared for, the dykes which, many miles to the North, kept the sea out, have given way, and the land has become strongly impregnated with salt. What with the rain and the hundreds of pilgrim feet that had trodden it all day, it was now in many places a morass, through which our beasts struggled pluckily, sinking deep at every step. For miles before we reached the convent we saw its high walls and white domes before us against the Northern sky, while the fast-dying sunlight glorified the pools of water on the desolate plain. By and bye we made out the peaked roofs of countless tents

clustered round the convent, and at last, just after sunset, while the glow yet lingered in the sky, we rode up to the seething mass of humanity which seemed so strangely out of place in this otherwise lifeless district, and were warmly greeted by the Bishop's representative and the occupants of the monastery.

This was my first surprise. I had always been told of St. Dimiana's nuns, and nothing had been said to me of monks. When and how the change had taken place I do not know—probably centuries ago, but "*min zimaam*" (a *very* long time ago), my informants told me, there had been monks here and no nuns. I congratulated myself that, through the kindness of the L——'s, I had not come alone.

The Commissary—for I cannot otherwise reproduce his official title—was a courteous gentleman of middle age, in the black robes and turban of the Egyptian monk. He at once greeted me with a special welcome, informing those around him that this lady was a pilgrim indeed, since he had seen me above five years before visiting the holy places at Jerusalem. It was quite true that I had done so, but I had no recollection whatever of seeing my present host anywhere in the Holy City. We were given the three best rooms in the *deyr* for ourselves—one as dining and sitting room, one for the men and one for the women to sleep in. They were rather distressed to find that we had brought our own provisions, assuring us that everything had been prepared for us. However, we made a hasty supper, and then wandered about in the *deyr* by ourselves, as the priests

had withdrawn to allow us to eat, and were now assisting at one of the constant services of the week in the principal church. It is quite impossible to give in words a clear description of the arrangement of the various churches and chapels and other places within the convent walls, so I shall not attempt it. There was a good deal of still unfinished building, and bare walls where the finances had not yet allowed of decoration. Some of the old wood-work had been kept, but we did not find any particularly good specimens of ancient work, partly because the dense pilgrim crowd everywhere prevented any thorough researches. Everyone greeted us with courtesy, and no one begged of us or annoyed us in any way, though we seven were by ourselves. We looked at the huge round tomb under which the forty martyrs are said to rest, and then wandered into the crypts near, as everyone else seemed to be going that way. Presently we passed through a narrow archway, and found ourselves in the midst of a crowd of the poorest sort of pilgrims, packed so tight in a perfectly barren chamber, that we were at once



FILLING WATER JARS.

surrounded and unable to move. We were carrying candles, but on our entrance there went up a general cry, "Put out the light! oh! put out the light! we must not have the light!"

Fortunately, we all understood Arabic, and were all anxious to hurt no one's feelings. By a common impulse we extinguished our candles, and were all at once enveloped in a darkness and silence so profound that it seemed as sensibly felt as the contact of the dense mass around us. I acknowledge that I slipped my hand into that of the French Judge, who happened to be next me, determined to keep hold of someone I knew, at any rate. There was a moment's dead pause, and then through the darkness rose one of the most pathetic wails I ever heard. It was an earnest appeal to *Sitte Dimiana* to forgive them, to be gracious unto them, and to appear to them once more. No priest took any part in it or countenanced it, but we found that the poorer and more superstitious of the pilgrims held this meeting every year since the *Shadow* ceased to appear. One man only chanted the prayer, but deep murmurs of assent broke again and again from the mournful crowd. After some moments a slight movement among them allowed us to escape, and we went back towards the living rooms of the *deyr*, where we found the Commissary, the Monk in charge always of the Convent, and the Priest of *Mansourah*; which trio evidently considered us in a special sense their guests, waiting to go outside with us. Miss L. and the daughter of France were too tired, but the rest of us could not lose the chance.

We had already been looking down on the lighted fair from our windows, and had seen one thing which puzzled us very much. It looked exactly like a Mohammedan *Zikr*, and I appealed to our hosts to know what it meant, but they were evidently disturbed at the question, and turned it off, saying, that they were foolish people; it was not good; it was nothing at all. We pressed

them no further, but afterwards we went to see for ourselves, and then did not wonder that the good priests disapproved of it. It was a caricature by the Egyptian Christians of a Mohammedan *Zikr*—a most dangerous pleasantry on their part, and, I imagine, only indulged in because they believe that just now, while the English are in the country, the Mohammedans will not dare to attack them. The leader of the *Zikr* wore a false nose and beard, with sundry grotesque additions to his dress, which, doubtless, had some special signification, and the imitation went on with bursts of derisive merriment, and, I think, abuse of their Mohammedan masters.

In deference to the evident uneasiness of our hosts we turned aside from this unedifying spectacle, and went by the flickering light of a candle to see the sacred well—which has acquired sanctity from the fact that it is the only well of sweet water for miles round in this barren and brackish region, and that it has never been known to fail. Then we wandered in and out of the lighted camp, where diversions of all kinds were being carried on. Every one seemed orderly and happy, there may have been plenty of bad language, since that, I fear, is inseparable from low-class native talk; but we heard none, not even the familiar oaths of the Cairo streets; nor did we see anyone the worse for liquor, and only about three beggars, I think, the whole time. Our own idea would have been to linger among the different groups where amusements were going on, but after passing through the principle street of tents our companions made it evident that we were expected to leave the gay scene behind us, and walk across a dark expanse of desert

* A *Zikr* is not an essential feature of the Mohammedan religion, by the better sort, I believe, such practices are condemned. It is generally performed by members of the different guilds, who call themselves *Dervishes*, but in ordinary life are peacefully-inclined barbers, donkey-boys, &c., &c. One of the best known examples is that which tourists go to see every week in Old Cairo, under the name of "the howling *Dervishes*."

to a cluster of faintly twinkling lights. The Commissioner had returned to the Convent, but we had still the two other priests with us, also the son of the priest of Mansourah and a young Europeanised Copt, who was very officious, and whom none of us liked very much. We afterwards found that he hoped to interest one of us to procure a Government appointment for him.

We walked across the plain, and presently the lights resolved themselves into a group of three tents—the camp of the priest of Mansourah, who had sent word that we would honour him with a visit. We were received by two nice looking girls, one of whom spoke French, and both dressed in a mixture of European and Native garments with several articles of jewellery, evidently arrayed in all their best to do us honour. We did not gather—one must not ask direct questions on such subjects—whether the Priest's wife had been left behind in Mansurah, or whether she was dead. One of the girls was his daughter, the other a relation, who had come to the fair with them. Both were apparently unmarried and very shy, answering only when directly addressed, and sitting with down-cast eyes in the presence of men, though, of course, they wore no veils.

We went through the stages of sherbet, cigarettes, and coffee, and exchange of courtesies, most of which was done by the American lady, who was by far the best Arabic scholar among us. Then we went back to the camp, still accompanied by the Priests, but though anxious not to scan-

dalize them, and a little uncertain how far they approved of such things we could not resist entering a large theatre tent where a Coptic company were performing a play which seemed to me to be taken from the *Arabian Nights*. The Priests entered gravely behind us, and no sooner were we observed as their guests than way was made for us to pass in as far as the dense crowd would allow, and the men nearest insisted on giving up their seats to us, but all was done very quietly, and the moment we were comfortably settled everyone became absorbed in the play again. The fishermen acted with extreme vigour, the other characters, who were chiefly of high rank, maintained the impassive countenances and dignified movements which Oriental fine manners require. But it was getting late, and we did not wish to oversleep ourselves on the morrow, so we withdrew after a time and sought repose on the divaïss. Here Mr. Sideros played us just the kind of trick which I might have expected, but which took us all in. We were very anxious not to miss the solemn celebration of the baptismal service with which the last and greatest day



THE WATER BUFFALO.

of the feast begins. It is a custom, evidently dating from the times of persecution, to collect all the babies born in the district since the preceding year and bring them to be baptised on this day, when travelling can be done in large numbers and friends easily gathered together. The babies are kept in the back ground till the ceremony is over, and it is performed early in the morning, doubtless, if there were any reason to fear a Mohammedan attack, it would be gone through, as so many of their great ceremonies are, just after midnight. As it is, the babes and their mothers are brought in to spend the night in the church, as the place of greatest safety. But the most touching feature is that when the baptism is an accomplished fact the greatest publicity is given to it, as there is nothing a good Coptic dreads so much as any appearance of being ashamed of his religion. In this case, after the church services are over, the fathers of the children are mounted on horseback, and are led in solemn procession about the camp, bearing their newly christened infants in their arms, that all the faithful may know that these children have been duly received into the Church.

We particularly wanted to see the baptisms, and asked Mr. Sideros at what hour the service began. He did not believe we really wished to get up so early, but thought we said so out of politeness; and told us the hour at which he thought we should like to appear, namely nine o'clock. We believed him, with the result that when at nine o'clock we joined the congregation in the chapel we found that Mr. Sideros himself had been up since six attending to his religious duties; and the baptisms were all over. The babies still lay about on their mother's laps, and the church was still crammed, for the second part of the service was about to begin the solemn first communion of the older children who had been brought up by their parents for that purpose. The crowd was so great about the doors of the sanctuary that though everyone made way for us we

could not have seen much; and the Commissary was evidently very anxious that these representatives of the strong Christian power whose sympathy the copts are so much concerned to gain should carry away a just impression of their services.* There was a brief whispered consultation, and then our party was invited to pass the gates of the sanctuary, and chairs were placed for us at one side, so that we could see what was going on without making part of the group around the altar.

The priests—only one of whom actually officiated and was in full vestments—stood in a semicircle round the west, north and south, and the children, boys and girls alike stood in a semicircle meeting them on the north, east and south sides, all facing the altar. Sundry male guardians and friends of the children stood behind them, along the eastern wall of the chancel, or sanctuary, as it is called in Egypt. The Egyptian altar, as probably most of my readers know, always stands clear in the middle of the sanctuary, and in the earlier churches the seats for the elders and priests are built against the wall of the apse behind the altar. In a cathedral church the central seat of these stone benches is the bishop's throne and elevated above the rest.

The children all carried tapers in their hands, and the little girls all wore white veils—simple ones of native cotton hanging down behind, but not over the face; such as they wear every day, though the every day veils are generally of coloured cotton. The service was mostly in Coptic, so we understood very little, but some of our party had never seen the Egyptian rite before. It is only in the Egyptian church, I think, that they retain the most primitive form of administering the sacrament—a sop dipped in wine. The service is very long, and the incense-

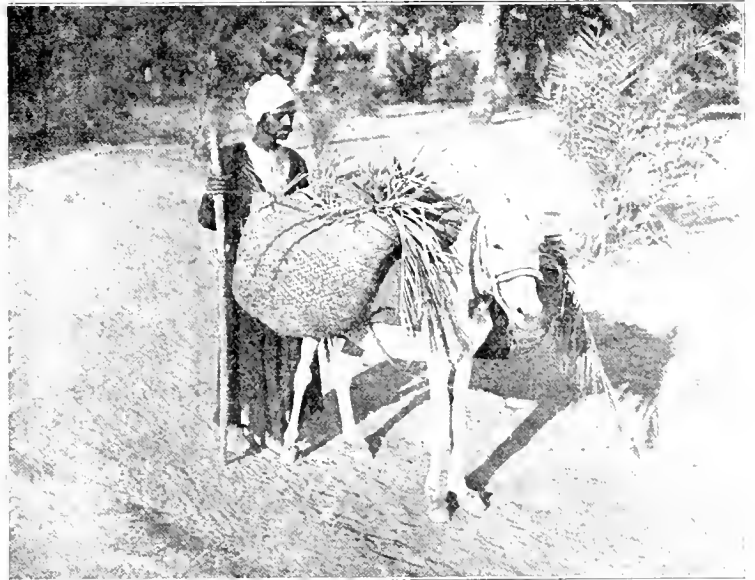
* As a matter of fact, besides Mr. Sideros, who was a pure Egyptian of the old stock, our party consisted of one American, two Anglo-Irish, two of mixed Belgian and English blood, and one purely English—but we all passed as English together.

laden atmosphere became too much for our American friend so she retreated in a somewhat ignominious fashion through a side door, but the rest of us waited till the children, each with his clean napkin (provided by the church) held carefully under his or her chin; had received the sop, and the procession began to form. Then we slipped out in the rear, but stood on one side to see it pass us again before leaving the church, the priests and choir boys chanting, the banners borne before the children, and all carrying lighted tapers. It was a matter of some difficulty for the procession to make its way round the crowded church, though the people squeezed together and tried to leave a clear lane for them as they came. Once one of the girls veils caught fire, but a bystander started forward, and instantly crushed out the flame with his hands. After that he took away the tapers of the smaller children and extinguished them.

The atmosphere was rather suffocating on a hot day, and we had seen enough, so we quietly withdrew from the church, and went out again into the camp. We bought some beads and bangles in the bazaar; every thing we saw was imported, though some kinds of the glass bangles and other things cannot be bought in Europe, as they are made only for exportation. Little crosses and rosaries, and gay cotton handkerchiefs, with materials for sewing, filled most of the picturesque stalls. One of our party bought an article of native manufacture, very difficult to get, and worth several dollars—a cup carved of

rhinoceros horn in one piece, and almost transparent. The great merit of them in Egyptian eyes is that they are supposed to show by change of colour if any poison is introduced into the cup. But the natives do not come to Sitté Dimiana's fair to sell, though they eagerly buy the foreign wares brought there for the occasion by enterprising traders.

The Shiekh of Bilkas, like most of the other great men in the camp, was holding a final reception, and we were invited to enter. It was like all other Egyptian receptions, two lanes of men sitting along each side of the tent in their picturesque robes, some on chairs, some—towards the entrance, or less honourable part of the tent—on the ground, while servants carried round the sherbet with its embroidered towel, the cigarettes, and finally the coffee. The Egyptians have learned now that English ladies do not smoke, indeed, only the married women among themselves do so, and they think it no impoliteness when we refuse, but one of the Judges did not smoke, and this was a thing they did find difficult to understand.



EGYPTIAN DONKEY.

Careful explanations had to be made in every case, lest offence should be taken at so strange a refusal of hospitality.

It was while we were in the Shiekh's tent that the baptismal procession came by, and it was the most picturesque and interesting sight of the fair. We saw it well, for they paused opposite the Shiekh's tent for some moments; he being one of the notables who was particularly desired to take cognizance of the fact that the baptisms had been duly performed.

First came a water carrier, offering to every one the water of the sacred well, "without money and without price." Then the trumpeters, blowing on the silver trumpets of the church. Behind, the great banner, followed by two smaller ones, all beautifully embroidered and surmounted by beautiful old silver crosses of considerable size. Then some priests and other officers of the church walking, and then two and two, mounted on horseback, the fathers of the newly-baptized infants, holding them in their arms for all the world to see. The fathers were clad in silken copes and garments from the treasury of the church for the occasion, and presented a really imposing sight. We saw them several times again later, as they made their slow way in and out among the tents. On the outskirts of the camp a game was going on, which gave occasion for a pretty display of Egyptian horsemanship; but I had seen such games before, and was anxious to get a rough sketch of the convent, so leaving the rest to watch the players I made my way back to the deyr, got my sketching things, and went out to the south-east of the convent, the camp lying on the east, north, and west sides only. I had to shelter myself as best I could under my sunshade from the mid-day sun,

for the desert was absolutely flat and treeless for miles. A good many of the pilgrims were curious to know what I was doing, but as I had so pointedly withdrawn myself from the camp their good manners would not permit them to follow me. Only two little boys, whose father probably was not there to restrain them (no self-respecting Egyptian boy, I fear, would pay the smallest attention to a mother's command), crept shyly and silently across the intervening space, and took up a position behind me, commenting in subdued whispers on my proceedings.

I could not stay very long in the fierce sun; besides, it was growing near the time for our departure. We had a hasty lunch, and then some of us asked leave of our host to ascend to the roof of the convent and see the view. No doubt he thought it an odd fancy in the burning heat of the day—the proper time to walk upon the roof is sunset—but he most courteously mounted up every step of the way with us, and seemed pleased at our appreciation of the view, though, indeed, there was nothing to be seen but the busy chattering many-coloured pilgrim camp below us and the far-reaching desert on every hand.

But the animals were waiting, and if we did not catch the one evening train from Bilkaas we must spend the night there, so we descended to the doorway and took leave of our kind entertainers with genuine regret. Once more we crossed the barren plain in company with a long train of departing pilgrims; once more we exchanged courtesies with Sheikh Mena at Bilkaas. By ten o'clock that night we had reached the friendly English household at Mansourah, and it seemed already days instead of hours since we left the Shrine of Sitte Dimiana.



A MATTER OF CERTAINTY.

By MAY BATEMAN.

CHAPTER I.

THE Church of St. Mary's, Lynbridge Wells, resounded with the echo of many voices one afternoon in early April, the eve of the Easter Festival. The dissipations of Lynbridge Wells were exceptionally mild in tone—Church decoration ranked highest amongst its opportunities of social intercourse excepting, of course, during its too brief "season," when a few inhabitants of larger spheres came to drink its waters and make game of the inhabitants. Notwithstanding, Lynbridge Wells had its objects of interests to itself: it had cliques of its own, classes of its own, including that bane of every parish—Vicar's classes; it had love affairs and courtships, ponderous tragedies and elaborate weddings.

If a stranger is interested in the pet foibles of any or every member of a certain parish, he cannot do better than play the part of eavesdropper on the occasion of one of the Church's manifold decorative seasons. Allowing for some irrelevant detail, or possibly some feminine latitude, he will, if a discriminating man, get a fairly competent account of whatever parish scandal is at the moment agitating the community. On this special afternoon, the parochial interest was centred round four leading personages—Violet Maynard, the recognised black sheep of the fold; Jack Hargreaves, the senior curate; Paul Seaton, the junior; and Lord Saltonsea, the terror of the neighbourhood, one of the Simeon Trustees, and owner of the joint livings of St. Mary's and St. Saviour's, the latter of which had just fallen vacant owing to the death of its incumbent.

As the church clock struck five, the busy workers re-doubled their efforts, the busy tongues wagged faster, mindful that the time of Evensong and enforced silence was

approaching. A girl in a straw hat, pushed back from her forehead, turned crossly to her friend, as the west door opened to admit a pretty, fair-haired girl in heliotrope.

"There's Violet Maynard at last. It's too bad she should have the pick of the altar decorations when she loafs in at the last minute, after we've been slaving and toiling all day. Besides, she's such an awful flirt. The Vicar has no business to encourage her."

"Does she flirt with the *curates*?" asked a Town friend, who had come down for the week and was meditating asking her relations to wire for her return home. "Because, if so, it must surely be a Lenten penance!"

"Did you hear Mr. Hargreaves cough last night in the Absolution?" asked a tall girl in the pulpit of a sympathetic friend. "He must have caught cold at the Maynard's dinner party. Just like Violet to ask him out at night when she knows his chest is delicate!"

"But he must dine *somewhere*," said her companion, with tears in her eyes. "I like him to have a decent *hors d'œuvre* or savoury in my better moments, once I can rise to the height of forgiving Violet Maynard her lovely frocks. I wonder if he has tried those new cough pastilles, or—oh, do you think one could send him some of that *Spongo-Pilenc* doctors recommend for bronchitis-waistcoats—anonymously, of course?"

"Flowers or fruit would be better," said the tall friend dubiously.

"If it were only Hospital Sunday! I should think the Vicar would allow him a few peaches. Cooks have their perquisites, and I'm sure curates should! I passed his lodgings yesterday, and the house looked dreadful, so uncared for."

"He ought to marry, of course," agreed the sympathetic friend.

"But who is good enough? And at least Mrs. Brady gives him cocoa, when he comes back at night soaked through."

"He's not soaked through every night," announced the tall friend hotly. "Cocoa's

no good. I tried it for a week and it made me sick."

"You should give it a chance," said the London girl, mischievously. "A week's no good. Why, *Koko* improved my hair like anything!"

"By-the-bye," said the tall girl, coming down from the pulpit to judge the result of her labours, "Is there any fresh news about St. Saviour's?"

"None; except that Seaton's almost sure to get it," said the girl in a straw hat. "He advocates the celibacy of the clergy."

"And you want it to go to young Hargreaves because he doesn't?" asked the town girl, amusedly, leaning back against the choir stalls. "It wouldn't be much use to you, if he did. A man may only marry one woman at a time—even on the munificent income of £400 a year!"

"It would settle things once and for all," said her friend, miserably. "One would know for certain if he really cared for Violet. It's awful, going on day after day in this uncertainty."

"But *why* go on day after day?" asked her friend. "If it's a mere question of a broken heart—well, hearts break, as much as they do anywhere, in town, too. But the town girl knows that her wits were given her of the gods to cover her disillusion. If a town girl is in love with one man, she flirts with every other; if he marries someone else, she puts on her prettiest frock and attends his wedding; if there's a misunderstanding and he won't help things to come right, she gives an extra sharp pointed turn to her evening's epigrams—that's all. The ache's the same, I grant you, but she saves her self-respect. See?"

"I see the lectern won't come right," said a girl in pink, throwing down some trails of snailax in despair. "It's too bad. He uses it *five* times each Sunday and *seven* times on Children's Service days!"

"Any news about the living?" inquired a new comer, an angular spinster, who had come to the tardy conclusion that she would

never again make friends with another curate because the inevitable parting was so painful. "How are the chances going?"

A chorus of voices assailed her.

"In favour of Seaton, of course, because nobody wants him to get it." "Just like old Saltonsea, he is a bear, that man." "Oh yes, it's a matter of certainty."

"I can't say I agree with you," broke in an elderly lady who had been having a heated argument with Violet Maynard in the aisle. Conversationally, Miss Maynard was unpopular, because she would talk ethics, or literature, or politics, or some topic wholly uncongenial to the provincial mind. "I *couldn't* conscientiously say I like some of the modern novels, written by unmarried girls too, with only one happy marriage to half-a-dozen stories."

"The percentage is rather high, perhaps," said Miss Maynard, unexpectedly. "But on the whole, the modern writer aims at being true to life. And anyway, the world acknowledges a few of them to be the wittiest and cleverest writers of the day. Some people cavil at anything in literature, you must remember. Before now, I *have* heard of a man possessed of a nasty carping scientific spirit, so far forgetting himself as to say 'rubbish' when he was reading the first chapter of Genesis!"

"Come and help me with the reading desk, Miss Maynard," called the girl from town. "We've been talking livings till my brain has whirled and I can't find a home for these tulips."

"In Lynbridge Wells we *can* only talk livings, and dyings," said Violet Maynard. "How are things going, by-the-bye?"

"You ought to know the latest development, Violet," said the tall girl spitefully. "Mr. Hargreaves positively seems to live at your house."

"The parish is keen on Mr. Hargreaves getting it," put in the girl in pink who had a reputation for good nature to keep up.

"If the parish is with him, the devil, otherwise old Saltonsea, is probably against him,"

said Violet, picking up a worm which the tall girl had just ejected from a handful of moss with a frightened shriek. "This kind doesn't bite, Milly. It's less harmful than one's neighbour even, for it doesn't even sting."

"Have you seen Mr. Seaton lately? But, of course not, because he always avoids you," said the tall girl, giggling. "Did you know that Saltonsea and he had made friends over you as a common enemy who endangered the Church in the shape of Jack Hargreaves?"

"Does Lord Saltonsea dislike me?" asked Violet apparently unmoved. "I never knew I was an object of sufficient interest for him to waste his wandering humours on!"

"He *abhors* you," said Milly eagerly. "He says you are always up to something, and nobody ever knows what, but it's sure to be harmful or mischievous. He said he would leave no stone unturned to prevent your benefiting by his living."

"I hadn't thought of doing so, till now," said Violet composedly. "But it's worth considering. There's a plum tree in the Vicarage garden that bears twice a year." She looked at the cross little group with an anticipatory smile of conquest. "You're right, Milly. It would be almost worth while to put up with the man for the sake of the living, wouldn't it?"

"Wretch" said Milly, furiously, as Violet swept calmly down the aisle at the exact moment that the Verger ushered in Mr. Seaton, and young Hargreaves, late as usual, flushed and panting, rushed in through the East door. "How mercenary she is. I bet you anything you like she'll take up with Mr. Seaton now that she thinks he's sure of the living."

"Waiting for the service, darling?" asked young Hargreaves, seizing Miss Maynard's disengaged hand as she passed him, under cover of a friendly gallery.

"No, I'm keeping the service waiting," said she with a small cool smile. "Don't let me detain you, Mr. Hargreaves, you're late already."

Abashed at the first cold words he had

ever received from her, the curate turned in the direction of the Vestry. A series of comments and innuendoes reached him on his way.

"Is the lectern as you like it, Mr. Hargreaves?"

"Oh, Violet's *utterly* worldly and unspiritual. She plays in private theatricals."

"You're quite mistaken, she's not a bit his style, so extravagant, why, his stipend for a year wouldn't keep her in gloves for a fortnight." "Such a flirt——too appalling, I call it. They say——" "Oh I daresay if it weren't for her painfully healthy complexion and those dreadfully blue eyes, she might be passably good looking, but——" "She has a nice smile." "Bad-tempered people always have. Violet's *dreadfully* bad tempered."

"Minx" said old Saltonsea, hobbling up to his seat, purple with anger because Violet had stopped to speak to him in the aisle. "Thinks she'll get the living for young Hargreaves with her airs and blandishments, I suppose. How he *can* be taken in by such a girl——! Glad Seaton's got a head on his shoulders, anyway. He's the man for me . . . Hullo, what's the woman up to now? Surely she's not got Seaton in her toils?"

For Violet Maynard, smiling her prettiest, blushing her rosiest, was talking animatedly to the junior curate in the transept of the Church. Her eyes were lowered demurely, her face rapt with the pensive expression which Paul Seaton, whose bent of mind was ascetic, thought it decorous for a woman to wear. They were apparently arguing some point or other. Mr. Seaton bespectacled, benignant, was looking down upon her with the same smile of clerical conquest. Finally, with a vivacious gesture of submission, Miss Maynard deposited her parasol in an adjacent pew, and sitting down made room for Mr. Seaton at her side.

"Why, Violet has stayed after all," thought Jack Hargreaves in surprise, as he entered the Church a moment later with measured

tread. He had unfortunately arrayed himself in his least good hood which motives of economy prompted him to wear in Violet's absence. "And with Seaton—Seaton, of all men!" He stared blankly at the pair till his Vicar's frigid eye recalled him to his neglected duties. "What on earth—'Rend your hearts and not your garments,'" he began hurriedly.

One, at least, of his congregation seemed to be in more immediate danger of rending another person's heart than her garments. With her golden head buried between her graceful fingers she made a devout and reverential figure which made her Vicar's heart leap with thanksgiving, and his senior curate's with envy, for she shared her hymn book with Paul Seaton, and he found her places for her when she got mixed between the Collect for Ash Wednesday and Easter Eve, and sang harsh second to her sweet first, moreover, he held his umbrella over her as she went out into the rain, at the close of the service, and even went so far as to escort her to the broad, white carriage drive which led up to her house.

CHAPTER II.

"Coombe Manor, Lynbridge Wells.

"April 16th.

"Dear Mr. Hargreaves,

"I fear I shall not be in to-morrow if you call, nor any day you call, and as regards the explanation for which you ask, I cannot acknowledge your right to control my actions in any way whatsoever.

"Yours truly, VIOLET MAYNARD."

Jack Hargreaves found this letter awaiting him on his return from an early week-day celebration. At first reading he hardly took in its full force. He knew that the world called Violet Maynard "hard," "cold-blooded," and a "flirt," but it had never occurred to him as possible that a woman who had loved a man should go back on her word to such an extent. He had trusted her through the most ill-natured of the many

ill-natured reports which had reached him. He had called upon her times out of number and been told she was "not at home." He had seen her shopping in the High Street, and been greeted with a frigid bow, he had met her out at local "tea parties" only to find her too immersed in conversation to welcome or notice him. He had excused her, wistfully, on the score that their engagement must necessarily be kept secret until he had a position worth offering her, but now, he had no longer any right either to condone or to explain away. For the letter contained no "until," he reminded himself.

He rose and looked out languidly at the depressing landscape, which faced his study window, blurred by the Lynbridge rain which holds its own against all competition. It was a dreary expanse of common, backed by sombre yew trees and a few acres of waste land on which some cows were pasturing. Inside the room it was hardly less dreary, yet there, on the shabby green rep sofa she had sat a week before, had arranged the flowers in the little common white vase on his mantelpiece, and at parting, had looked back to him, her eyes heavy with the mute passion of tenderness which sometimes crosses a woman's face as she leaves her lover—a look that stirs a man's soul. She had been so unusually gracious that afternoon, had even listened patiently to what she called "The inessential details of his dull career," his parochial anxieties, and accounts of his *Guilds for Working Men*, or *Bands of Hope*.

Things had gone badly with young Hargreaves lately. There had been an outbreak of low fever, from which he had barely recovered before his Vicar caught it, and left him with double duty on his hands. There had been a clever correspondence in the *Fortnightly* on a doctrinal point, which had forced him to a resentful compromise between his reason and conviction—Jack Hargreaves liked to accept a creed out and out, or not at all—and worst of all, there had been the ceaseless anxiety, the hoping

against hope, as to the result of the St. Saviour's living.

He had striven to the uttermost, he had toiled at his sermons, had worked hard socially, only to find that Lord Saltonseas was obviously set against him, was prejudiced in favour of a man who, *vide* Violet, had but two claims to distinction, an unpleasing voice and an unpleasant manner.

This letter came as the culminating point of his misfortunes. Violet had tired of him, naturally perhaps; the modern woman tired easily, men said. She had treated him badly, she had thrown him over in his time of difficulty, yet he could hardly blame her. He had no special art to recommend him, after all, he was a simple-natured man.

The clock struck the quarter. He looked at his note book. 9.30 a.m., District Visitors' Meeting; 11, Matins; 12, Sunday School Teachers' Class; 2 p.m., Servants' Class; 3, M.C.L. Meeting; 5.15, Evensong; 6, Young Men's Class; 8, a Lecture on "Antiquities in a neighbouring parish," he had no time to spare. He caught up his hat and coat hastily, leaving the letter lying open on the table.

It was eleven o'clock at night. A tired man came slowly across the Common, the rain sweeping against him all the way. He was worn out, mentally and physically; his lecture, an extempore one, had been a failure. His mind had refused to concentrate; the mental picture of a girl's golden head had obtruded itself upon his line of vision, in place of the wide rows of commonplace, commonsense people. In the darkness and cold his thoughts gathered force, he combated them, but they returned resistlessly. She had deceived him, she had been false.

The light in the hall was out. He turned the latchkey in his door. The fire in his rooms burnt low. A kettle stood disconsolately on the hob. The remains of his hurried meat-tea, uncleared, were left an unappetising jelly of dried fat and gravy.

A letter stood beside his plate. The room

struck chill, he shivered. He lit the gas, and held the cramped old-fashioned hand-writing up to the light. The letter was from Lord Saltonseas.

"Dear Mr. Hargreaves," it ran:

"Come and see me to-morrow at 4, in reference to St. Saviour's living. I believe you will suit me.

"Yours, &c.,

"SALTONSEAS."

Hargreaves laid the paper down, slowly. Curt as it was, he considered its kindly tenor. Someone, the cat he supposed, had knocked over the vase containing Violet's flowers, they lay withering amidst the disorder of broken glass and smouldering embers, in the grate. As he stooped to pick them up, he saw her letter open before him lying where the wind had blown it on the floor.

"I cannot acknowledge your right to control my actions in any way whatsoever."

These words also, crude and cold as they were, carried conviction. Their deeper meaning came home to him. He had met her driving with Seaton that afternoon. She had accepted the man for the sake of the living, then had given him up when she thought his chance had gone! But the living was his, or should be, and yet, long as he had striven for it, what was it to him now, robbed of her?

CHAPTER III.

"Someone to see you, Sir."

"To see me?" repeated the Vicar of St. Saviour's wearily. "I'll be out in a minute, Tommy."

It was late September. The Rev. John Hargreaves sat in his commodious study, the windows open to the garden in which he allowed his housekeeper's children to play. There was a suggestion of coming winter in the air, the apples were russet in the orchard, the nights drew in early. He had been working so hard lately, with such singular success, a very mockery of success he sometimes thought, that he had had no time to notice the changing seasons.

The last few months had aged him. Perhaps it was the responsibility, perhaps it was the effort of pleasing old Saltonsea, he *was* pleased, there was no doubt of that, perhaps it was the constant waiting for news which never came. He had no right to grumble at fate. Everything was going well. He had his work well in hand, his parishioners were congratulating themselves, his house was delightful, his curate unobtrusive, there was nothing he could ask of life except the one thing wanting. He turned suddenly. There was a rattle at the door handle, an impatient knock, a hurried entry, a moment's pause, and then, with no explanation, with no time for astonishment even, the Vicar of St. Saviour's found himself holding a half-laughing, half-crying woman in his arms as though it were the only natural and convenient place for her to find herself.

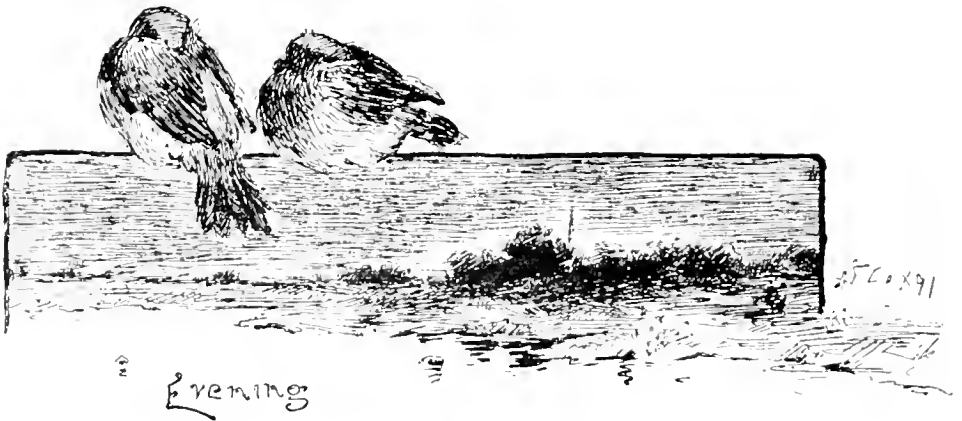
"Don't ask me to explain!" said Violet Maynard, after a long interlude. "I never could. It came to me that Easter Eve, they told me Lord Saltonsea was going to give the living to Seaton because he hated me. It was no use to throw myself on his mercy,

it wasn't there for me to throw myself on—I was the last person to do it. It would have been sufficient for him to know for certain that we needed it to make him give it to the other man. So I worked on other lines, I flirted with Seaton, as you know, and the world said I was engaged to him, and old Saltonsea gave you the living out of sheer cussedness simply because he thought that if Seaton had it, he would marry me."

"If you had only told me," said her lover, it was his one reproach. "You never even gave a hint. You don't know what I've gone through. Couldn't you have let me know?"

She raised her eyes overbrimming with tears and mischief.

"But you're dreadfully conscientious," said she. "You'd never have allowed me, and I shouldn't have liked you if you had, besides, you can't act! I've seen you try to (in private theatricals). Why, I waited till you made your way here, and I won mine, never mind how, with old Saltonsea, before I even dared to make this move. But now it's all right, isn't it? Sure? Sure? You love me and forgive me? Truly, dearest? Like the living, it's a matter of certainty?"



SIGNS



SIGNS.



PARADOXICAL though it sounds, yet it is indubitably the fact that the absence of signs is a sign of the times. The sign of old-world shop-dorm, a thing of beauty, a veritable conjunction of the art of painting and the craft of working in iron or wood,

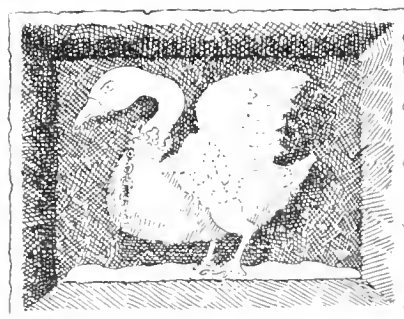
was picturesque but not utilitarian; as an advertisement it lacked the brute strength of the modern poster which so successfully arrests one's attention by depriving one of the breath of life by its glaring hideousness of design and colour; moreover, it incurred the displeasure of Parliament by its various physical peculiarities, and by an Act of 1762—has the Act ever been repealed?—was condemned in favour of the characterless number, doubtless less confusing, but the acme of the commonplace. Regulated in size and position, the sign, had it been suffered to exist, would have added grace and beauty to our modern streets, which the lamp-post and pillar-box of to-day, however gaudily painted, can never

give; but it was not to be—the sign vanished, and with it the high-peaked roof, the overhanging windows, and the picturesque chimney-stack, and in their place came stucco and regularity, and the rest of “the modern improvements.”

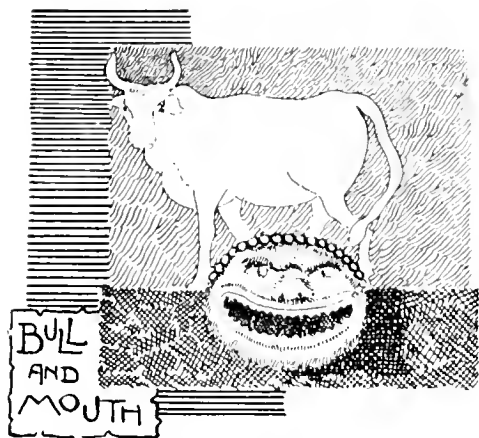
Not only did the sign provide employment for numerous painters—not necessarily of an inferior class, as one of the original Royal Academicians, Mr. Wale, was not above painting public-house signs when called upon to do so, and there were others, especially Mr. Catton, Isaac Fuller, and a certain artist of the name of Lamb, who were particularly clever at sign-painting—but it also added to the humour of the age, when one side of the sign was devoted to rhyming lines.

Who, for instance, could enter his barber's shop with a countenance full of gravity after reading on the sign without the following lines:—

Oh! Absalom! Oh! Absalom!
Oh! Absalom! My son,
If thou hadst worn a periwig
Thou hadst not been undone.



A
STONE * "THE SWAN"
SIGN * ~~~~~



The quatrain being appended to a picture of David weeping on the occasion of Absalom's death.

Further down the street, perhaps, there would be a tin-man's shop, in which case it was the invariable custom of the followers of that craft to hang out a cage containing a squirrel decked with bells, as a sign, the antics of which served to keep the citizen in good humour as he made his way to his office.

Living signs apparently were not numerous, however, as the lines quoted below a sign-post at Grantham show :—

Two wonders, Grantham, now are thine,
The highest spire and a living sign.

The living sign in question, which, in conjunction with the highest spire, comprised the proud boast of South Lincolnshire, was a bee-hive all in working order.

The only signs which still flourish are those of public-houses in the country, as in London, alas! the sign has to a great extent given place to the magnificent creation of gas-burners and cut glass, which is proudly suspended over the public-bar door of the resplendent beer palace of the present day; but out of the Metropolitan radius, signs still swing, and provide weather-bound cyclists with food for reflection when attempting to discover the meaning and origin of such titles as "The case is altered."

The corruption of old titles by the un-

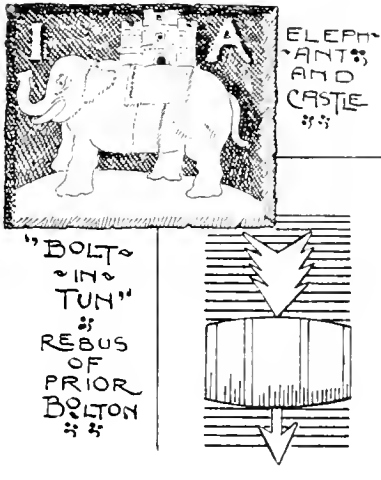
educated has resulted in many peculiar conjunctions in Inn signs: for instance, there does not at first sight appear to be much connection between "The Devil and the Bag o' Nails," which is the present day equivalent for "The Devil and the Bacchanals"; nor can we discover why an Inn in Kensington should be called "The Hoop and Toy," doubtless it is a corruption of some sort, but of what we cannot fathom. As Ben Jonson said:—

It even puts Apollo
To all his strength to follow
The flights, and to divine
What's meant by every sign.

"The Iron Devil" does not present many difficulties, though the sign may not represent the swallow ("Hirondelle"), as it should; but on the other hand "The Pig and Whistle" allows plenty of room for conjecture, some authorities connecting it with "Wassail," while others say it owes its derivation to *Pige Washael*, i.e., the Virgin's Greeting. Our rustic never took kindly to the language of Gaul when he met it over his tavern door, as in days gone by he frequently did, and he invariably translated it into something more homely: *Cocur Doré* failed to appeal to him as the "Golden



Heart," though he was ever ready to enter "The Queer Door" so ready, indeed, that



it seemed the most natural thing in the world to translate *La Rose des Quatre Saisons* into "The Rose of the Quarter Sessions," a name that could have been applied with much appropriateness to the never-to-be-forgotten Jane Cakebread.

The question of how English taverns came to possess foreign titles is difficult to answer. Why should the Dutch "Goed in der Gouden Boots" (the God—Mercury—in his Golden Boots) be the sign of a tavern in this country, is a question not only puzzling to-day, but apparently in days of yore, for patriotism (and perhaps ignorance) demanded that in future the inns bearing that name should be known as "The Goat in Golden Boots," a transition something on the same scale as that of the Puritan sign "The Goat and Compasses" derived from "God encompasses us." The probabilities are that the publicans owning the taverns with foreign titles were formerly valets who had accompanied their masters to the Continent and had a great desire to show off their knowledge of Continental tongues. In such examples as "The Cat and Fiddle" and "The Bull and Mouth," we have instances of attempts to perpetuate the memory, in the first place, of Caton, the faithful governor of Calais (Caton Fidèle), and in the second, the naval victory at the mouth of Boulogne Harbour (Boulogne Mouth), just as "The Ship and Shovel,"

derived from "Sir Cloudesley Shovel," was intended to honour that redoubtable admiral; worthy intentions frustrated by time and the general desire of the uneducated to have something easy to say and remember when inviting friends to accompany them to those popular resorts.

The poetry of public-house signs naturally enough runs in a groove, and usually contains an invitation to the wayfarer to enter the hostelry and sample the liquor. In some instances a gentle hint is also conveyed that the entertainment is not free. An inn which had a gate as its sign had the following inscription upon it:—

"This gate hangs well,
And hinders none;
Refresh and pay,
And travel on."

Another inn kept by an erstwhile shoemaker exhibited as a sign the representation of a last, and the following legend was written below:—

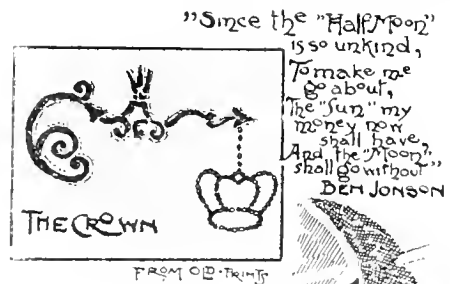
"All day long I have sought good beer,
And at the last, I have found it here."

Modest and comforting!

Very quaint was the sign of a country tavern where London porter was sold, consisting as it did of the figure of Britannia engraved upon a tankard, in a reclining attitude, underneath being written the motto:

"Pray sup-porter."

"The last tavern for a mile" was the legend hung out of a public-house a mile from Hyde Park Corner, with intent to coax



the anxious and thirsty traveller within its doors. As a matter of fact, there was another hostelry about ten yards further on, but an opportune milestone interpolated itself between the two, and saved the landlord's reputation for veracity.

SOME DOG EPITAPHS.

By REV. J. HUDSON, M.A.

MOST of the Readers of *ATLANTA* have seen or heard of many a strange epitaph inscribed on some time-worn tombstone, and if these could be all collected together in a volume, they would be a curious addition to antiquarian lore.

The following little article, however, has nothing to do with *human* sepulchres.

Many a *dog*, who well deserves to be called "the friend of man" has been interred with due funeral obsequies, and has had his epitaph inscribed on the monument that marks his last resting place.

A few such are subjoined, most of them selected from poets whose names are tolerably familiar.

What a quaint idea is that of "Melanipus' epitaph": those who remember the stentorian voice of the Parish Clerk in the good old times, will appreciate the humour of it!

"If you'd not seen him, but had heard him bark,
You would have sworn he was the Parish Clerk!"
DRUMMOND.

The following lines on a dog's grave embody a commendable sentiment:—

"Not hopeless, round this calm sepulchral spot,
A wrath presaging life we twine;
If God be love, what sleeps below was not
Without a spark divine."
DOYLE.

This is the elegy over Trouncer, the foxes' foe:

"Short be thy strain of monumental woe;
Foxes rejoice! Here buried lies your foe."
BLOOMFIELD.

This is certainly a high tribute of praise to the hunting prowess of the deceased hound.

Here is another tribute to canine fidelity:—

"His friends he loved: his fellest earthly foes
Cats—I believe he did but feign to hate,
My hand will miss the insinuated nose,
Mine eyes the tail that wagged contempt at fate."
WM. WATSON.

Everybody knows the famous poem in the *Ingoldsby Legends*, called the *Cynotaph*, and which begins

"Oh! where shall I bury my poor dog Tray,
Now his fleeting breath has passed away?"

and when the poet has chosen a spot at the "root of the gnarled and time-worn tree," this is the conclusion:—

"Simple and few,
Kinder and true,
The lines o'er his grave—They have some of them,
too,
The advantage of being remarkably new."

EPITAPH.

"Affliction sore,
Long time he bore;
Physicians were in vain!
Grown blind, alas! he'd
Some prussic acid,
And that put him out of his pain!"
BARHAM.

What a simple yet graceful little elegy is this over his spaniel Tracie!

"Now thou art dead, no eye shall ever see
For shape and service spaniel like to thee,
This shall my love do, give thy sad death one
Tear, that deserves of me a million."
HENRICH.

Our next is entitled "A Proud Boast."

"I never barked when out of season,
I never bit without a reason,
I ne'er insulted weaker brother,
Nor wronged by force or fraud another,
Though brutes are placed a rank below,
Happy for man could he say so!"
BLACKLOCK.

Cowper gives us one in the form of a riddle:—

"Here lies one who never drew
Blood himself, yet many slew ;
Gave the gun its aim, and figure
Made in field, yet never pulled trigger,
And gave wonder vain, to shorten
Was Pointer to Sir John Throckmorton."

COWPER.

Bobbie Burns commemorates a lap-dog called *Echo*, in which he plays on the name and its associations :—

"In word and wild, ye warbling throng,
Your heavy loss deplore ;
Now, half extinct your powers of song,
Sweet Echo is no more.

"Ye yawning, screeching things around,
Scream your discordant joys,
Now, half your din of tuneless sound
With Echo silent lies "

BURNS.

This is inscribed over *Tory*, a puppy :—

"He lies in the soft earth under the grass,
Where they who love him often pass ;
And his grave is under a tall young lime,
In whose boughs the pale green hop-flowers climb.
But his spirit, where does his spirit rest ?
It was God who made him—God knows best."

MORTIMER COLLINS.

The next one also formulates a theory of canine immortality, but in a more humorous strain :—

OUR DOG JACK.

"Our old friend's dead, but we all well know
He's gone to the kennels where the good dogs go,
Where the cooks be not, but the beef-bones be,
And his old head never need turn for a flea."

PAYN.

There is a sarcastic verse, more in the nature of an epigram than an epitaph, on some elegies written in memory of a lap-dog :—

"Poor dog, whom rival poets strive
To celebrate in plaintive strains,
If thou hadst howled so when alive,
Thou hadst been beaten for thy pains."

ANON.

Here is one in Dog Latin on a dog called *Crony* :—

"Ehen! hic jacet Crony,
A dog of much renown.
Hic ful, hec macaroni,
Though bred and born in town.
In war he was a cerrimus,
In dog-like arts perite,
In love alas! he is errimus,
For he died of a rival's bite.
His mistress stravit cenotophi ;
And, as the verse comes pat in,
Ego qui scribo epitaph
Indite in dog Latin.

ANON.

The following is, over Lord Overy's *Hector* :—

"These are the honours by his master paid
To Hector's manes and lamented shade.
His looks and voice his inward thoughts expressed,
He growled in anger, and in love caressed.
When Hector's virtues, man proud man displays,
Truth shall adorn his tomb with Hector's praise."

ANON.

This is over poor *Shock* :—

"Here Shock, the pride of all his kind, is laid,
Who fawned like man, but ne'er like man betrayed."

GAY.

Another epitaph over a spaniel again gives the palm of superiority over man to the buried dog :—

"Here rest the relics of a friend below,
Blest with more sense than half the folks I know.
Fond of his ease and to no parties prone,
He damned no sect, but calmly gnawed his bone ;
Performed his functions well in every way—
Blush, Christian, if you can, and copy Tray."

PETER PINBAR (Walcot).

Over "*Marmion*," a harrier, we may read :

"Oh, loved in life and mourned in death,
Upon thy simple bier,
The rose and myrtle's fragrant breath
Blend with affection's tear ;
And proudly verdant laurels wave
Their branches o'er my Marmion's grave."

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

At Newstead Abbey, the seat of Lord Byron, is the grave of the poet's Newfoundland dog, "*Boatswain*," which bears the following extravagant eulogy :—

"Near this spot
Are deposited the remains of one
Who possessed beauty without vanity,
Strength without insolence,
Courage without ferocity,
And all the virtues of man without his vices."

Underneath are 26 lines of laudatory verse, of which the last two may be quoted, as showing not only the poet's affection for his dog, but his own morbid, melancholy temperament:

"To mark a friend's remains these stones arise;
I never knew but one— and here he lies."

BYRON.

Gay's allusions to dogs are full of life-like touches. How admirably drawn is that village cur, the pertest puppy of the place, that yelps at everything, and receives at last its due reward. Over its untimely sepulchre is the warning legend:—

"Thy teasing tongue had judgment tied,
Thou hadst not as a puppy died."

GAY.

In the Fellows' Garden at St. Peter's College, Cambridge, is an epitaph over a dog called Lion:—

"Quo desiderium? nunc inter sidera uesor!"

"Die mihi, quid tuis Sirius?" "Immo Leo!"
which may be thus freely translated, at the risk of its being accounted doggrel:—

"Dear master, O cease to bemoan,

I've a place 'mongst the stars with Orion!"

"Do you mean that as dog-star you're known?"

"Oh no! as of old, I'm the Lion."

And perhaps this may be the last, for the present, of canine epitaphs. And to conclude with, let us glance at two couplets which have served as inscriptions for a dog's collar. The first is by Pope, and was written for one of the royal dogs:—

"I am his Highness's dog at Kew:

Pray tell me, sir, whose dog are you?"

The second was written by Dean Swift for a lady of his acquaintance:—

"Pray steal me not, I'm Mrs. Dingley's.

Whose heart in this four-footed thing lies."

The dog, indeed, is a noble animal, and many beautiful poems have been written about him in all ages. We must, most of us, agree with Lord Lytton's sentiment that

"Never yet the dog our bounty fed,
Forgot the kindness, nor forgot the bread."

MRS. JOPLING'S SCHOOL OF ART.

"Great Nature, mother of the world assist us;
As we adore thee, aid us!
Great Mother, teach us,
For we adore thee!
This is the Litany of all true art,
The Litany we learn with hand and heart."

And echoes of this chorus are in every item of the training given to the students at Logan Place. The very air seems charged



MRS. LOUISE JOPLING.

with it the moment you enter that bright studio, and most especially if the gifted artist who holds all-sway there is present, for under her influence it is impossible to flag, there is something inspiring and breezy in the very grasp of her hand or sound of her voice. The students are, one and all, devoted to her, and the number of successful young artists who have come from this Studio should fully justify Mrs. Jopling in her feeling of pride for the school and school-working, which is now some eight years old.

Nature, true nature, as you see it, when you have learnt that art, is the rule through

all, for, to use Mrs. Jopling's own words, every artist must have "An eye that can see Nature, a heart that can feel Nature, and the boldness to follow Nature," and with a maxim like this it stands to reason that every student, even the quite young ones, has to work from the real object, whether it be a vase, a flower or the figure, for with drawing from still-life the student quickly arrives at the figure. The antique is used only as a corrective, and to train the student to a true appreciation of the beauties of line and curve, muscle and movement. "Movement" sketching, by the way, is a great feature of the working and is of very great assistance to "black and white" work which is given special attention, one afternoon a week being devoted to it. Drawing from "memory" also is much practised, for, as Mrs. Jopling says, "It is the best way of testing whether you have quite understood what you have been working at." In the same way anatomy and perspective are studied, though the actual model that the students are working from and studies of the bones and muscles are made in accordance with the different poses. Three days in the week the students work from the nude, and on the others the model poses for the head or the costume. The day I saw the Studios it was a brown-robed portly monk, fingering his beads. I also saw some charming studies of a lithe young boy, which had been done in the open air, for Mrs. Jopling's students have a tremendous advantage over many of the other schools, in that they may, when the weather permits, work in the charming and secluded garden which connects the Studios with her house, and here also they sometimes have four-legged models, horses, &c., so every kind of work and taste may be indulged, both in subject and medium. Oil, water-colour, pastel, modelling and miniature painting, one and all have their share in the school working, as Mrs. Jopling does not believe in plodding on in black and white for an indefinite time, but rather encourages the use of colour as a

means of learning to draw with the brush, and I am sure, by my own personal experience, that it is a great help and push in the study of art, for it also shows you if you have the sense of colour, as sometimes it happens that students, after going through a long course of charcoal and chalk, are completely lost when they touch colour, and the discovery is so disheartening that all the years of study are thrown away, whereas if they had known it from the start, they would have made it their aim to become black and white artists only.

One thing to which strict attention is required is the composition class, when every week a subject is given, and the sketches of the previous week criticised. These sketches are shown on the Studio wall, and a fine is demanded from the student who has not supplied a study for her allotted space. Another delightful arrangement is the students' "Manuscript Magazine" to which literature as well as art is contributed, and very clever some of the contributions are.

There is always an assistant teacher working with the students, who is a student



LADY COLIN CAMPBELL.

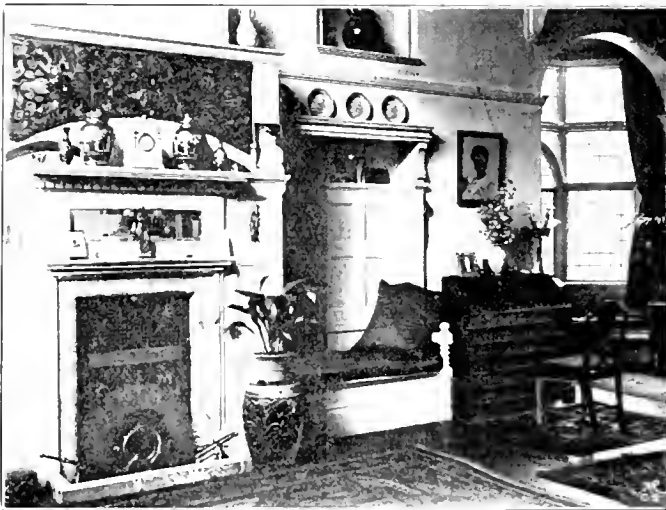
herself, and not so far ahead of the others as to have lost touch with their doubts and difficulties: they are generally changed once a month, and every day Mrs. Jopling herself goes round with words of advice or warning, censure or approval, as each student may deserve. Sometimes she will give a "Demonstration" lesson, and by painting a study of the model herself before the students show them in practice the theories of her training. How successful the theories have proved may be seen by the work of the several young artists who received their art training in Mrs. Jopling's schools. Among them should be mentioned Miss Winnie Austin as an animal painter, and Miss Biddy Macdonald and Lady Alice Egerton, who have since set up a Studio of their own for students. Miss Maud Nevill has done some very good miniature work, and among the illustrators is Miss Alice Goyder.

The Studios themselves, of which I have not yet spoken, are beautifully lit and airy, and in the cold weather are well warmed by hot pipes. In the large one there is a stair-

case which leads to a large balcony that runs across one end of the studio, and which, besides adding greatly to its picturesqueness, is found of great use at the charming Students' Balls, often fancy dress, for which this Studio is really famous, as Mrs. Jopling fully believes in the old adage of "All work and no play," &c.

Doubtless, members of the Sketching Club, you have seen the announcement of a splendid chance of a whole year's scholarship, which, to use her own words, Mrs. Jopling is offering "to the readers of that charming Magazine *ATALANTA*," and I can only add that the winner should consider herself fortunate above her fellows. One word to those in the country. Logan Place is not more than ten minutes' walk at the outside from Earl's Court Station, and also the Secretary has a list of nice and comfortable apartments for those who wish to be close to the schools, which, except for a week at Christmas, a week at Easter, and a fortnight in August, are open all the year round.

MAUD J. VYSE.



A CORNER OF THE STUDIO.



"The eighth was August, being rich array'd
In garment all of gold down to the ground."

AUGUST may be well described as the debatable ground between summer and autumn, though which has the greater claim to it is, perhaps, difficult to say. In the beginning of the month, the rich glow of summer is seldom in fuller perfection, but towards the end the red-breast, herald of winter, is heard, and cattle make their "shrill autumnal bellowing," while

"The sunny wall
Presents the downy peach, the shining plum,
The ruddy, fragrant nectarine, and, dark
Beneath his ample leaf, the luscious fig."

AUGUST in the Alban Kalendar was the sixth month, and named *Sextilius*. The place it now occupies was given it by Numa, but it was denominated August by the Roman Senate, in honour of Octavius Cæsar, better known as Augustus. The Saxon name was *Ern* or *Barn-monat*, signifying the filling of their barns with grain, and in their Kalendars the month was pictured as a carter standing near a waggon laden with corn. The later representation, however, of August, is a young man with a fierce countenance, dressed in a flame-coloured garment, crowned with a garland of wheat, carrying on his arm a basket of fruit, and having a sickle stuck through his belt. On the 23rd of this month the sun enters the sign Virgo, the Virgin.

Opinions differ greatly about the origin of the name "Lammas Day," some authorities holding that the appellation *Lam* or

Lamb-mas originates from St. Peter having been the patron of lambs, as the 1st of August was known in the Roman Kalendar as the Feast of St. Peter ad Vincula, or St. Peter in Bonds, commemorating the imprisonment of the holy apostle. Again, it is asserted the name *Lammas* is derived from the Saxon *Hlaf-mas*, i.e., *loaf-mass* or *bread-mass*, which was held as a feast of thanksgiving for the first-fruits of the corn. It was always observed with bread of new wheat, and in some places degenerated into a usage for tenants to bring in to the lord of the manor the first wheat of the year on or before the 1st of August. New wheat is called *Lammas-wheat*.

One very old custom was formerly observed on *Lammas Day* in all the country within six miles west of Edinburgh. The preparations began about a month beforehand, and consisted of building a tower, in some conspicuous place near the centre of their district, by a hundred or more herdsmen, who formed themselves into a band for the purpose. The tower was about eight feet high, with a flag-staff and banner waving on its summit. During the building of the tower, great care and watchfulness was observed that the opposition party did not demolish or deface it, as that would have been accounted a great disgrace. As, however, it was equally considered a great honour to in any way injure the building of a rival tower, many and daring attempts were made to overcome the vigilance

of the guardians, each party trying to raze their rival's tower to the ground. This kept things lively during the month of preparation, and varied the monotony of building with a pleasant little excitement. As the tower advanced in height, the nightly guards were made stronger, each person being furnished with a "tooting-horn" to give the alarm in case of a surprise attack. These horns were perforated at the small end, through which wind could be forcibly blown from the mouth, making a loud sound, and to gain greater proficiency in the use of them, every one practised upon it during the summer while tending the herds, so that by Lammas time the whole country was ringing with the sounds.

On the approach of Lammas Day, each band chose a captain from among their number, and displayed a stand of colours, which consisted of a fine table-napkin, borrowed from a farmer's wife, with a fanciful device placed on it with coloured ribbons. Early in the morning of the 1st of August, they marched forth to their tower, where they displayed their standard and blew a flourish of defiance on their horns. Scouts were sent out on all sides to warn them of the approach of the enemy. If a hostile band appeared, they marched out to meet them, the captain carrying the colours. On meeting, each band desired the other to lay down their colours in token of subjection. If one band was much weaker than the other, this would be complied with, discretion in that case being considered the better part of valour. But if equal in strength, neither would yield, and the contest often ended in bloodshed. At its conclusion, the two bands marched together, the vanquished body behind the other, and they afterwards parted to join in games and races, each in their own district. This was discontinued about 1762.

Lammas Day in London was celebrated by a rowing match on the Thames, from the "Old Swan" near London Bridge to the "White Swan" at Chelsea. This was instituted by one, Thomas Doggett, in 1714,

who gave a waterman's coat and a silver badge to be rowed for by six young watermen on the 1st of August, to commemorate the accession of George I.

St. Rock's Day, August 16th, was the old English holiday of Harvest Home. The harvest festival itself is very ancient in origin, and can be traced back to pagan days. There were many and varied styles of celebrating it, each county probably having a different one, but several of them were very curious, for instance, in Shropshire and Herts, there was a sport called "Crying the mare." The tops of the last blades of corn were tied together by the reapers, which was the *Mare*, and they standing some distance away threw their sickles at it, the one who succeeded in cutting the knot taking the prize. Another sport in Herts was for the farmer to drive furiously home with the last load of corn, while the reapers ran after him with bowls of water to throw upon him. In the north of Devonshire the great sport of harvest home was "Crying the neck." When the reapers were reaping the last field of wheat, an old man would go round and pick out from the shocks of wheat some of the best ears, which he made into a very neat little bundle. After the reaping was finished, all the men, women, and binders stood in a circle, and the old man with "the neck" in the centre grasping it with both hands. He would then stoop and hold it near the ground, while the men took off their hats, holding them with both hands to the ground. Then they would all begin to cry in a very long, harmonious tone, "the neck!" at the same time slowly raising themselves up and lifting their arms above their heads, the old man with "the neck" also raising it. This was done three times after which the cry was changed to "wee yen!" "way yen!" which was also given three times in the same way. One of the men then snatches "the neck" and runs with it at the top of his speed to the farmhouse, where the dairymaid stands at the door with a pail of water. If he can get into the house



without passing her, he is entitled to kiss her, but if not he is seused with the water from the pail amid great merriment from the others. This sport signifies the end of harvest.

August 24th commemorates the Feast of St. Bartholomew, who was flayed alive at Albanople, in Armenia, by order of Astyages, brother of Palemso, King of Armenia, about A.D. 72. There was an ancient practice in Croyland Abbey, of giving little knives to all comers on St. Bartholomew's Day, in allusion to the knife by which the Saint was flayed. It was abolished, however, in the time of Edward VI., by Abbot John de Wisbech, as a great and needless expense.

It was a custom as far back as 1688 for journeymen printers to make new paper windows about Bartholomew-tide, when the master printer made them a feast called the *way-geese*, to which the corrector, founder, smith, and ink-maker were invited, and expected to give money to the workmen to spend at the tavern or ale-house after the feast. The *way-geese* was maintained long after the paper windows became obsolete.

August the 29th is the day set apart by the Kalendar of the Church of England to commemorate the decapitation of St. John the Baptist.

GERTRUDE OLIVER-WILLIAMS.

VIRGO



RIVER MISTS.

BY ETTA COURTNEY.

THE cynic, lounging on the ferry steps, watched his fellow-bachelor punting Corran across the river.

It was a windy day, and she fully occupied with keeping some sort of control over her large hat. She could have gone quicker a good deal, and more comfortably by the usual ferry boat, but the cynic noticed that when George Venn offered to punt her, she accepted with alacrity; probably because she liked novelty, it being the weakness of her sex.

George Venn was pushing his pole with eager force.

There was something in the gyrations of his rather thick-set figure that called a smile to the lips of the cynic, who himself was lithe and slim. He was so thoroughly aware of Corran's artistic prejudices.

He premised exactly what would happen on the other side of the ferry; the progress of Corran shopping into the town and George Venn's enactment of the faithful St. Bernard hound well trained in his vocation of following his mistress into shops and carrying the market basket.

George Venn would have command of about as much conversation as the St. Bernard; would be as equally interesting for company *à deux*, minus the good looks.

What found Corran most admiration in his eyes was her piquant little tongue—the odd mixture of childishness and the common sense of worldly wisdom, with an amusing versatility.

The previous evening she had been charming.

He had taken her then to see the progress of his picture, and one or two poignant remarks of hers had given him a wider grasp of his subject than he, with all his thought and experience, had come at yet. She was quite a wonderful little woman.

The two across the river did their shopping and returned; this time by the ordinary ferry boat. In truth, there had been all the while little waste of words between them, it had been a silent journey; but Corran felt his hands trembled as he helped her ashore; and he, looking, saw how soft her eyes were suddenly grown.

"'Tis a lovely evening," she said, for want of better words, as they stood still looking back over the water; he may have answered, for there was some sound of speech.

Another pause.

Then Corran turned and claimed her basket and ran in with a quick good-night—for the gate was just against the ferry—leaving him there.

A lovely evening indeed—soft and mysterious, with the first faint misty veil of autumn; but there was a sudden chillness in the air, and he shivered. Corran had of late grown like this with him, silent and vague. He remembered her always as she had been that day in the spring—the second time he saw her—when she came with her aunt to Gresham Street. Some of the fun and laughter lingered for him yet in the corners of the old dingy rooms.

It was about this time that the cynic teased Corran a good deal to show him her sketches.

"They are nothing to see," she averred; "you would only laugh at each poor attempt."

"What a particularly unkind remark!"

"Mr. MacLarran, you know how you utterly despise the 'lady artist.' I saw how politely you were smothering your scorn yesterday when we came to Miss Landon painting by the river."

"My dear child, have you ever yet seen pink water flow uphill? It is an effort beyond even Nature's expansive powers; as are also cabbages topping oak boles. Both these wonders Miss Landon has achieved. Perhaps what you took for scorn was envy."

Corran laughed. He looked at her with his curious greyish-green, wide-placed eyes,

and she blushed, hating herself for her utter incapability of preventing it.

Nevertheless, the sketches were not forthcoming that day, or the next, which showed Corran had an equal tenacity of purpose in withholding as he displayed in his frequent asking for them.

Meanwhile, MacLarran, cynic and artist, pursued his character study—a pleasant amusement with so charming a subject as Corran, whose moods took as many shades as the rushes wind-blown down by the river yonder.

Occasionally, it appeared, she fell in with George Venn, for the cynic met them sometimes together; and to his keen eyes they looked more often than not a little out of tune. His observations were mostly very correct.

The bachelors were sitting over their after-dinner smoke, and there was no sound in the room but the gentle puffing of tobacco and the occasional click of Venn's pipe as he tapped out the ashes before re-filling. He was a quick smoker.

It was he who broke the silence at last. He got up and fetched a drawing, which he placed at a convenient-seeing angle on the mantelshelf. He then walked backwards in a half-hesitating way he had to survey it.

"Not a good light—eh, MacLarran?"

He carefully readjusted the lamp.

The other man sat up.

"That's a good drawing; it's not one of yours, Venn?"

"Stunning, isn't it? No; it is Miss Gregson's; she lent it to me."

"Why, what a little 'hum' the girl must be; told me she couldn't paint at all, and declared I should laugh her to scorn if I even saw her drawings. Either she professes an awe of MacLarran, R.A., which she doesn't feel, or she occasionally lapses from veracity."

"I am not an R.A., so perhaps that is why I am privileged."

George Venn's tone was dry.

"To be sure, *amico mio*."

The cynic swallowed a certain twinge of annoyance, as he struck another tangent on the same circle. The outcome, emitted between blue smoke fumes, was what a charming chatelaine of No. 48 Holland Park, Corran might be.

"She is so innately artistic," mused MacLarran, comfortably contemplating his tartan stocking. "Extraordinary in so young a girl; her aversion for everything ugly or commonplace would be amusing, if one did not so thoroughly sympathise."

George Venn winced. He had latterly grown aware that he was come to the time when a man's hair thins on the temples and his figure loses some of its elasticity. He was forty-seven, and had never been good-looking.

"She will make a delightful little wife, yet I rather wonder how much of her elasticity would bear the friction of marriage; no doubt her development would follow the usual lines, and end in the nursery. To the winds, then, with art, and all her prattle would be of the baby's tooth."

The cynic spoke in his mellow after-dinner voice; the ball of his conversation was fairly rolling, and no one ever enjoyed its slow progress so much as himself.

George Venn made no answer. He likewise had a mental picture of Corran in the course of possible, not probable, development; but its shadowy outlines differed from MacLarran's—though a little child figured therein, and one other. George could imagine Corran's eyes very tender, with a mother's light in their grey depths.

The cynic's monologue was still unwinding, touching on white velvet and diamonds for Miss Gregson, for which the old Greek tapestries of the Holland Park studio would be delicious foil; of little dinners with Corran presiding over the polished mahogany and old Worcester, etcetera, at more or less length.

Venn got up at last, and went across to the window, where he stood fidgetting with the blind.

"Do you mean it seriously," he asked, in his quiet voice.

"Seriously? My dear fellow, romance is sweet in our prosaic world; if Miss Gregson could hear our conversation, no doubt it would afford her considerable amusement; her eyes might sparkle though — what woman's wouldn't at the mention of diamonds."

All women are not absorbed by greed—save Miss Gregson from the implication. MacLarran, are you serious in this matter or not?"

MacLarran shrugged his shoulders as he turned away whistling the old tune, "When a man's married," &c. It was his only answer.

Above Lipton the river takes many curves before it reaches Hford, stretching through the meadows to be met beyond in glorious depth of foliage—a fair English pastoral.

Corran had dressed herself in blue, but there was some white uppermost in her gown that toned the whole into a rare harmony with the lush grass, where the sunshine mingled gold, side by side of the long shadows of an autumn afternoon. She came stepping daintily with a pretty shyness, kittenwise.

MacLarran went towards her, looking long into eyes that matched the blue about her. Beyond him, standing by the river's brink, stood George Venn. He made no move beyond a most conventional greeting, and Corran, piqued, resolved she would for once not be tongue-tied she would break the spell that was come about her lately.

"You are queen of the fairies," said MacLarran bending over her, half-whispering, "we are your subjects, command—what is your wish?"

She dropped him a pretty courtesy. "Prithee, good sir, I have passing need of some of yonder lilies, and methinks 'twould be fair on the river this noon."

MacLarran clapped his hands.

"Well answered, faire ladye, I and my fellow-slave will do your service."

So they took a boat and rowed into the backwater where the lilies grew plentifully, and plucked for her handful; and Corran wove them into a chaplet and crowned herself; but one flower she put in her bosom, and her hand went to it sometimes half-tenderly.

"May I come and see you in London, Corran?"

George Venn was busy threading the boat through the eyes of the backwater; it was almost *tête-à-tête* for the cynic and the girl. MacLarran sat beside Corran, and his pulses quickened to see the quick rose come and go in her cheeks.

"My aunt will be very pleased to see you, Mr. MacLarran."

"And you, Corran—will you not be pleased also?"

"It will be a reminder of the lovely time here, certainly," said she with tantalising uncertainty.

"And, nothing more?"

"Oh, yes! another celebrity for aunty's visiting list—she dearly loves celebrities."

Corran, how cruel you are; so I shall be only a reminder?"

"Cruel?" said Corran, opening her blue eyes.

He tried to take her hand, but she moved dexterously.

"And what should I serve to remind you of?"

"The most beautiful spot on earth, of reeds and rushes stirred by soft winds, of sonnets—" She hesitated, stopped.

"I believe you are a poet, you little water-witch," said the cynic tenderly.

Thus they babbled.

George Venn, the unhappy third, clenched his hands; he could have thrown MacLarran there and then into the water—he writhed under the torture Corran so ruthlessly inflicted.

She chose at length to remember him. "Don't you think, Mr. MacLarran, it would be kind to help your friend with the boat; I am afraid we have forgotten how

hard he has been working all this while."

MacLarran's hand went up to his moustache with a quick movement of annoyance he had; 'tis cruel to be thus thrust out of Heaven.

"You must be magnanimous, Venn; as councillor-in-chief to her majesty she and I have had weighty matters to discuss."

Venn's reply was obscure.

On the homeward journey Corran had a fancy to sing.

Her voice was pretty music mingling with the dip of the oars in the water; she sang them, "Annie Laurie" and snatches of this and that old song, and over George Venn crept memories of childhood, sweet as pot-pourri in an old room; tender, sweet memories of his mother's crooning to the children in the gloaming. Unconsciously, tears stole to his eyes.

Then Corran's voice, which had been so soft, broke into a passionate minor melody.

"If thou wert scorned,

I would kill my pride

And humbled, and outcast, would live with thee."

Both men looked up startled by the change. Corran's hands were clasped, her face looked white in the dimness of a swiftly come twilight.

"If thou wert old,

I would yield my youth

In the hope—the hope—I might pass to thee."

Almost with the last note the boat's keel grated on the gravel of the landing.

It was George Venn who walked with Corran the few steps to the white gate.

"Good night," said she, giving him her little cold hand. He watched her go in.

"If thou wert old, if thou wert old,

I would yield my youth—"

The words rooted in his brain, and would not be put away.

Up in her small room that looked over the river, Corran took from her gown the lily her hands had touched, and kissed it, again and again, and all the while she was crying.

The next day was storm-touched. Great steely wind-tossed clouds chased across the horizon, dropping from their trailing

skirts showers of cold drops that stirred the river to sullen anger. It swirled by the wooded planking of the quay, hurrying with the burden of its disquiet to the mighty receiving arms of the sea.

Corran had found a sheltered corner by the mill, and wrapped in a great coat stood listening to the river's weeping, its tumult rested slightly her own disquiet.

George Venn, mackintosh-clad, came down the road that bends round the Minster, with another sharper turn to the quay.

He caught sight of Corran standing there—hesitated and half turned away—yet after all went on to where she stood leaning on the Old Mill Bridge. It was more than he could bring himself to do, to leave her without one word of farewell.

The greeting between them was a silent one.

Her grey eyes had caught the sky's sad reflection, they looked misty and troubled—depthless.

She seemed so slim and tender a creature standing there, touched almost by the cruel-looking wheel, with the swirling water all around her. George Venn longed to take her into the warmth of his arms, shutting out the cold ugliness of everything; it was in his mind how like was the great dark wheel to some hideous inexorable destiny shadowing her life.

He stood looking down at her wrapped in the silence of uncertainty and trouble.

"A sad day for my last," he said at length.

Corran turned with a swift look.

"Your last day? What do you mean? We did not know you were going away."

"I did not know myself till I got home last night. I am obliged to go."

There was a curious sound in his voice, as if the tension of speaking came near snapping with some hidden pain. Her quick ears caught it.

"You are in some trouble. Why have you never told us?" she said, very softly.

"The letter only came last evening. My mother has always been an invalid, but I

never guessed this was so near. Yes, she died yesterday morning" in answer to the question in her startled face.

He let himself look long then; it was so passing sweet to see the tears of sympathy in those misty eyes. He had half feared some conventional expression of regret. Corran drew a little nearer. He felt a shy, soft touch on his sleeve.

"I am so sorry, so very sorry for you."

Touch and voice thrilled him. In the midst of his great sorrow was it possible that he was stumbling on a greater happiness? Possible? No hardly.

George Venn was dumb, because he feared to risk speech; the trembling possibility of the moment was over sweet; a word, a movement, and it might be dispelled for ever.

Yet this moment was made at the same time hideous by a poignant sense of his unworthiness. He hated his insipid middle-aged personality; fancied how it must seem to this girl, with all her tender gifted life before her. And Corran thought his silence part of a grief too deep for words.

While the river swept on to the sea, lashed by the wind, suddenly a gust tearing round the Mill swept Corran almost off her feet, so that she swayed for a moment helplessly.

He put out his arm with a great start. The horror of the swirling pool below, and her nearness to it, sickened him. Good God! how little between! And her clinging touch—for she, too, had seen it—and the moment's horror, broke down the barrier of his silence.

"Corran," he broke out passionately, "why did you sing that song last evening? It is cruel to sing like that and mean nothing!"

"Corran!" He went to her, so that she felt rather than heard the trembling intensity of that one word.

The swift colour leapt to her cheeks; her sweet tremulous lips had no answer; only in the lift of shy eyes he found courage.

"I love you, Corran!"

Simple words, yet his hand on her's was trembling, and it was the touch of love. When her fingers stole into his he knew that it was well between him and her.

The cynic was an enthusiast in art; his devotion to it his one form of self-sacrifice. Amid all the shrieking elements he had got a boat moored in a sheltered back-water and was at work. An improvised awning kept off the rain; the floor of the punt must needs serve for easel—truly a back-aching situation. When he looked up and saw George Venn and Corran struggling down the path to the ferry, he admitted to himself that he would not have been equal to the task of guiding a woman and an umbrella in the teeth of a rising westerly gale, for one of these necessities sheltered both.

The cynic laughed rather snugly.

"Poor Venn; he is nothing if not amiable, even on such a day as this;" and then:

"Silly child to face such weather; I shall have to teach her wisdom."

But for once the cynic had been blind as an owl in daylight.



U

NDERGROUND PARIS.

AMONGST the throngs of visitors that crowd to the "Ville de Lumière" there are comparatively few who find leisure to visit the sterner side of the gay capital; by this I mean the "Underground Paris."

Perhaps in no city in the world is the subterranean aspect as interesting as in Paris, and an afternoon passed in the Catacombs can by no means be considered as wasted.

My readers must understand that running below the streets of this great city from Passy to Montrouge and back again to Chaillot are long narrow stone passages or quarries, which are supposed to have been excavated in the time of the Romans.

The sinuosity of this immense circuit, which covers 10,933 square metres of ground below the city, can easily be imagined by looking at a map of Meredional Paris; the stone quarries correspond exactly with the streets above, the only difference being that instead of broad lofty thoroughfares, the passages are but one yard in width and two yards in height.

The stones employed up till the 12th century for the building of public edifices and private houses, palaces, ramparts and churches were those extracted from these excavations. It can be readily understood that such proceedings could not be carried out without detriment to the soil above, the labour being done by more or less experienced persons, and with indifferent appliances. The inevitable result followed; towards the end of the 18th century many accidents of houses falling in, etc., occurred. Paris threatened to return to the quarries from which she had been extracted with so much pains by former generations. The attention of the police and Government was brought to bear upon this danger, a general examination of the quarries took place, and the work of consolidation was undertaken in the best possible manner.

Each gallery became the object of particular and incessant care, all the columns were thoroughly examined and repaired. Names corresponding to the streets above were given to the different passages, and seventy staircases, giving access to these quarries, were built up on different points of their circuit.

Solidity having been restored to the foundation of the city, the inhabitants of the "rive gauche" having been calmed of their anxiety, public attention, distracted by the American war, was being led away from the quarry question when a new, original idea brought it quickly back again to this same point (1780).

For several centuries the odours emanating from the different cemeteries, placed as they were in the midst of the town, became a veritable seat of corruption, the Cimetière des Innocents in particular was the just cause of complaint to the neighbouring inhabitants. This cemetery, situated close to the Central Market, was the largest burial ground of ancient Paris, its origin dated from the 5th century, and it took its name from the fact of a child who had been massacred having been buried there. It was also here that in 1572 over 2,000 victims of the St. Bartholomew were interred, and for 800 years twenty-two parishes brought their dead to this famous Cimetière des Innocents.

Naturally, with the gradual development of the City of Paris the sepulchres increased, augmenting yearly by two or three millions, and about the same time the cemetery itself became diminished in size by the building of several houses on one side of it.

These reasons led to complaints demanding its suppression, and petitions to gain this end were ever being sent to Parliament. All the means proposed by the chemists, and immediately carried out, were but momentary remedies. Only one measure could destroy the cause of the evil, and that was, of course, the suppression and evacuation of the cemetery. Again, this offered almost insurmountable difficulties, for how could

this be done without sowing the seed of corruption far and wide. Where could the millions of skeletons be sacredly transported? What means could be employed, what enclosure be chosen? These questions seemed unanswerable, neither the Church nor the Parliament could come to a decision. The danger became greater and greater, when in the year 1785 the idea of M. Senoir, then lieutenant-general of the police, to utilise part of the ancient stone quarries as a receptacle for the human skulls and bones, thus forming a subterranean burial ground, seemed an inspiration from heaven.

The project of evacuation concerning the Cimetière des Innocents was extended afterwards to the other cemeteries and churchyards. A general ossuary was decided upon, and from this time forward the quarries went by the name of Catacombs.

A permission to explore these can easily be obtained from the Prefet de Police, and twice a month the visit can be made under the auspices of a guide. The entry to the Catacombs is at the ancient barrier de l'Enfer, near the observatory, in the neighbourhood of the picturesque park of Montsouris, and a large crowd is ever ready waiting outside, on the prescribed days, to penetrate into the mysteries of the tomb. One particularity which cannot fail to strike the English tourist, is the perfect good nature of the French sight-seeing crowd; no matter what the weather may be or how long the waiting, no grumbling is heard; on the contrary, facetious remarks and good natured jokes are bandied from one to another. When at last the doors leading to the Catacombs are opened there is no pushing or jostling to arrive first, each waits his or her turn, the stronger often yielding to the weaker. As the long procession wends its way down the narrow winding stone staircase (one of the seventy aforementioned) each person holds in hand a lighted candle. These are sold at the entrance for a franc a-piece, and are arranged with card-board supports forming candlesticks; the flickering

light of these hundreds of candles is all one can distinguish at first on arriving at the bottom of the stone steps. When the eye becomes accustomed to the gloom, one finds oneself in the narrow passages, already described, and after about a quarter of an hour's quick walk one enters the Catacombs, similar passages, on each side of which are piled up in the most artistic fashion possible all the bones and skulls dug up from the cemeteries. These relics have all been classified, placards with the names of the cemeteries and the date of their evacuation and transportation being placed on each several pile: thus one passes the Saint Benoît, Cimetière des Innocents, Saint André, Saint Sulpice, to give the names of a few of the most important. Many illustrious persons of rank and literature have been traced to this last resting place here. The bones of the Pommereux family, the princes of Conti, the Perraults, Corneille's successor at the French Academy, de la Motte Houdard, Henri d'Aguesseau, and a crowd of other famous celebrities, too many to enumerate, help to decorate the walls.

Every now and then one is forcibly reminded of the brevity of Life and the certainty of Death by numerous texts and extracts from the different poets. Posted up on the charnel house of the ancient cemetery of St. Severin one reads the following beautiful inscription:—

"Tous les morts ont vécu, toi qui vis tu mourras
L'instant fatale est proche et tu n'y penses pas."
Again, on the gate of the passage leading to the remains exhumed from the cemetery of the Parcheminerie:—

"Passant, penses tu passer par ce passage
Ou pensant j' ai passé?
Si tu n'y penses pas, passant, tu n'es pas sage
Car en n'y pensant pas, tu te verras passé!

It would be impossible to quote a tenth part of all the verses one reads in this style during one's pilgrimage through these interminable winding passages. An hour's walk brings one to another flight of steps leading to the earth above.

ALICE DREYFUSS.



ON THINGS IN GENERAL.

"SUMMER sales are the one institution in which one can suggest no improvement," said the chaperon. "They come just at the time when one wants to buy things; we are all leaving town and going abroad, or up the river, or to the sea, and, of course, we want unlimited new shirts and skirts; and so, just at the moment when the demand might fairly have raised the price, the benevolent shopkeeper has a sale and lowers it. I hope all you girls have been successful in your purchases."

"I have," said the bride, "for just at the right moment I discovered that to be quite *chic* one should ride a bicycle in a white skirt and a dark silk shirt. Dark skirts and light shirts have become so monotonously general, so have I invested in three white skirts, buttoning at the sides, and a couple of dark shot *glacé* silk shirts for my bicycle tour with Tom. You can have a skirt washed anywhere, you know; but it takes a skilled laundress to get up a shirt properly."

"The worst of white skirts is, that they run up so in the first washing," said the engaged girl. "If they are the right length to start with, they are ungraceful the first time they come back from the laundress."

"The remedy for that is easy," said the bride. "Unpick the hem before you send it to the wash. When it comes back, measure how much it has shrunk and turn up a new one. The hem is easily undone before the material has been wetted, and the marks of the stitches wash out. The one thing to remember is, that the piece of drill or strong

calico with which you intend to turn up the hem must be washed too, or it will shrink in its turn, and draw the skirt in at the foot."

"It is late to talk about the Jubilee," said the girl of three seasons, "but I am still overflowing with pride in our splendid army. The troops passed our house in Phillimore Place on their way from Hounslow, and when I heard the bands, I got up and watched them. I remembered how sorry I used to be in Germany when I saw all those ungainly shop lads and clerks dragged out of their beds at five o'clock in the morning, to be trained for soldiers against their will, and remembered how every man in our army was a soldier of his own free will, and I fairly quivered with pride in them."

"What I like best in our army," said the chaperon, "is the fact that there is no antagonism between the people and the military, as there is in other nations. The civilians don't hate the soldiers, and the soldiers don't despise the civilians; there is such genuine and manifest goodwill between them. Did you hear of that pretty incident outside the Baroness Burdett Coutts' house? There were too many people in the street, and the troops on duty tried to make them move on. The people laughed, and stayed where they were. They could not regard soldiers as in authority—they were part of the show, to be cheered, not obeyed. Some one leaned out of a window and called to the officer in command, whom he knew, 'Why don't you send for the police, Jack?' and the officer said, 'Why, that's just what I have done!' and presently a few policemen came and told the crowd to 'move on,' and they moved on, that was all. In any other country the military, finding the crowd unruly, would

have used violence, and there would have been trouble."

"That's something like what some of the Australian troopers told me at a party," said Cousin May. "They said all sorts of things about our police, because they are so absolute and so good-natured. They control the traffic as it is controlled in no other city, and yet they never bully or domineer."

"Oh! I did love those Australians," cried the ingenue. "They aren't a bit like the ordinary men one meets; they are like nice, big, good boys, and so handsome. I think it is splendid of them to be soldiers for nothing, and to spend their own money on horses and training when they might be amusing themselves. It was so funny to find a private soldier and a captain brothers, and quite happy over it. I mean the private not a private because he'd come down in the world, or had his heart broken, but just in the natural order of things. I liked the private best."

"I suppose he was the youngest," said the girl of three seasons.

"Of course—and the nicest," said the ingenue. "He told me he would give ten years off his life to have the procession over again. He said the sea of lovely dresses and lovely faces, and the roar of kind voices shouting a welcome that he felt came from their very hearts, was more wonderful than anything he could have imagined. He said he knew now England loves Australia as much as Australia loves England. He nearly cried when he said that. I never felt before quite how nice it is to be English."

"Did you read the account of the loss of the 'Aden'?" asked the chaperon. "That was a sad story, but so beautiful one could not help being proud of it. No officers were saved, because they all died at their posts; and the lists of the people in the boats did not contain the name of one man except those of the officers and crew necessary to work it. There could have been no fighting nor struggling for places there. Personally, it always seems to me a horrible necessity

that brave men should be bound to sacrifice themselves to women when, by the act of sacrifice, they show how valuable their lives are to the nation; but, of course, it must be, and when one remembers what happens elsewhere—when one thinks of the wreck of that German ship, for instance, when only some two or three women were saved, one entirely by her own persistent courage (you remember, she swam after a boat and clung to an oar, and one of the men in the boat cried, 'Knock her off!' and it was only after urgent entreaty that she found some one to help her in), one agrees with the child here that it is a splendid thing to be an Englishman, and the next best thing to that is to be an Englishwoman."

"By the way, I went to the Women Writers' Dinner this year," said Cousin May. "Can you conceive of a big dinner at which not a man was present, where there was not a dull moment from beginning to end? I could not until I went, but I can now. All the women there had husbands, or friends, or sweethearts; I mean, they were all the sort of women whom men like, and yet they could amuse themselves uncommonly well by themselves for a change. I never heard more fun, or wit, or interest in the conversation at any ordinary dinner. What was more, they all seemed to have put on their prettiest frocks for each other. One hears a good many jokes about men threatening to disguise themselves as waiters and listen to our conversation. I wish a few of the silly conceited ones, who like to think women invariably dislike each other, and are lost when they are together, would do it just for once. It would be a good lesson for them."

NORA VYNNE.



PANTOUM.*

Those eyes for him will gaze no more ;
 The wind is silent o'er the sea ;
 Lies quiet now, all trouble o'er
 The light that moved mysteriously.

RUTH YOUNG.

The wind is silent o'er the sea :
 The waves are resting side by side :
 A light that moves mysteriously
 The moon sheds on the turning tide.

The waves are resting side by side :—
 A calm that seems a deathly sleep :—
 The moon sheds on the turning tide
 A light that shows the shadows deep.

A calm that seems a deathly sleep
 Steals o'er the youth, so soon to die :
 A light that shows the shadows deep
 Burns steadfastly in his dark eye.

Steals o'er the Youth so soon to die
 A yearning tenderness for life ;
 Burns steadfastly in his dark eye
 A terror of the nearing strife.

A yearning tenderness for life,
 Whispers of Home, and waving grass :
 A terror of the nearing strife
 Whispers " Deny : and Death shall pass."

Whispers of Home and waving grass,
 The breeze that shakes the tiny sail ;
 Whispers " Deny : and Death shall pass !"
 The bowstring, luring flesh to quail.

The breeze that shakes the tiny sail,
 Soft mutters of a maiden's eyes ;
 The bowstring, luring flesh to quail,
 Shrill sings : " How painfully man dies !"

Soft mutters of a maiden's eyes
 Eastward that gazed for earliest light :
 Shrill sings : " How painfully man dies !"
 His heart, once tuned to soft delight.

Eastward that gazed for earliest light
 Those eyes for him shall gaze no more ;
 His heart, once tuned to soft delight,
 Lies quiet now, all trouble o'er.

THE literary world has suffered a sad loss, in the death of that gifted novelist, Mrs. Oliphant, one of the most prolific writers of the Victorian era. She has written steadily from the time of her first publication in 1849, until within a short time of her death, and the long series of works which have flowed from her pen have gained her a world-wide reputation.

Mrs. Oliphant was the daughter of Mr. Francis Wilson, and was born at Walleyford, near Musselburgh, Midlothian, on April 4th, 1828. She produced her first work " Passages in the Life of Mrs. Maitland, of Sunnyside," at the age of twenty-one, and immediately obtained success. This was quickly followed by " Caleb Field " and " Merkland," and in 1852 appeared an admirable work of Scottish life and scenery, " Adam Graeme, of Mossgray." In this same year she married her cousin, Francis Wilson Oliphant, an artist in stained glass. Her married life was of brief duration, her husband dying in 1859, leaving her with three children—two sons and one daughter—and these, too, have passed before her into the world beyond ; and death, to her, would mean re-union.

Mrs. Oliphant's industry has been immense, some of her earlier works appearing as serials in *Blackwood's*. All were distinguished by quiet humour, subtle insight into character, delicate pathos in the treatment of the gentler emotions, healthiness of tone, and feminine delicacy of thought. Her reputation as a novelist was firmly established on a sure foundation, after the publication of " Chronicles of Carlingford," which first appeared in serial form in *Blackwood's*. It

* Example of form for Reading Union Poetical Competition.

would occupy too much space to enumerate all the works she has given to the public, but scarcely a year passed by in which she did not publish one or more works, and after more than forty years' work, her pen had not lost its cunning. Amongst her best novels are, "Within the Precincts," "It was a lover and his lass," "Sir Robert's Fortune" (which first appeared in *ATALANTA*), "At his gates," "A poor gentleman," "Squire Arden," "The Minister's Wife," "The Wizard's Son," "Sons and daughters," "Diana Trelawney," and "The Prodigals." But her literary activity was not bounded by the production of works of fiction, for her contributions to historical and biographical literature have obtained a prominent place. Chief among religious biographies are, "Life of the Rev. Edward Irving," and the biography of "Dr. Thomas Chalmers, Preacher, Philosopher, and Statesman," and another important work is her life of her relative, Laurence Oliphant, and of Alice Oliphant, his wife, which passed through many editions. Among the best known of her contributions to general literature are:—"Historical Sketches of the reign of George II.," "St. Francis of Assisi," "A Memoir of Count de Montalembert," "The Makers of Florence," "The Makers of Venice," "The Makers of Modern Rome," "The literary History of England, from 1790 to 1825," "Jerusalem, its History and Hope," and "Historical Sketches of the reign of Queen Anne." But a short while ago she published an essay on the Brontës, in "Women Novelists of Queen Victoria's reign," and her "Life of Queen Victoria" was published in the *Graphic* in connection with Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee. And so has passed away from us, after a life of usefulness, one of the finest women writers of this nineteenth century.

MISS NELLIE HENRIETTA OWEN WILCOX has been awarded the Cobden Club Silver

Medal by the examiners in Political Economy at the University of Melbourne, Victoria. As Miss Wilcox is the first lady who has won the Cobden Medal, this is an event of interest.

THE recent appointment of Miss Clarrissa Shout as Registrar of Births and Deaths for Boston (Lincolnshire), District by the Boston Guardians, has turned the attention of girls desirous of earning their own living to this, by no means arduous work. Curiously enough, in the last official list of Registrars it appears that of 2,096 Registrars in England and Wales there are 84 ladies occupying these posts, most of whom have been appointed since 1890. The rule is that each Registrar must have a deputy, and it seems that there are no less than 363 lady deputy registrars.

NIGHT.

Behold the silent empire of the Night!
 Long since has Phœbus hid his ear of flame,
 And yielded up, reluctant, to the sway
 Of gentler Night, the earth he loves so well.
 And she, with tender care, her veil hath drawn
 Above its sleeping multitudes, who thus,
 Though all unknowing, reap her blessings sweet.
 Keep silence, earth, while, with mysterious power,
 The Night doth all unto herself subdue!
 And rest, ye weary multitudes, in peace!
 But thou, to whom sweet night brings no repose,
 If on thy sleepless eyes her magic fails,
 To Thee she brings a solace all her own—
 The revelation of her solemn power,
 Look up to Heaven and mark the countless host
 Of watchers whom she places over thee!
 Look down to earth, and praise the gift of sleep,
 To thee denied, wherewith all else are blest!
 Then, unrepining, lift thy thankful heart,
 Since over all in beauty reigns the Night.

MABEL L. V. HUGHES.

A TALANTA CLUB.

"ARE MEN OR WOMEN MOST PRONE TO IDLENESS."

FEW writers disclose the source of errors, and that because of incompetency of judgment and reflection. Idleness is a disease, and most difficult to cure. On one occasion Boswell told Johnson he had been trying to cure laziness all his life and could not do it. On an average perhaps the fair sex are more prone to idleness than men, they are too volatile and fickle to settle long to any definite employment. Variety is pleasing, and the gaily-painted butterflies flit from flower to flower in the sunshine, seeking honey from each and all in turn. Yet it is to labour and labour only that man owes everything possessed of exchangeable value, it has given us plenty, comfort and elegance, instead of want, misery, and barbarism. The foe women have to fight against is *feebleness*, that mysterious, incomprehensible element which is sapping vitality, and often *compels* them to inaction. At the same time I would give my sex their full due; some of the noblest work of the world has been accomplished by the hand of women, and they will yet do more, and do it right nobly, for their country's good and the well-being of their fellow creatures. Any sort of labour with industry cannot be wholly unfruitful; surely there is a kind of good angel waiting upon diligence, that ever carries in his hand a laurel with which to crown her.

"DELIA."

As a rule, women. Perhaps the difference in the mode of life of the average man and woman has a great deal to do with this. The man is busy from morning till late afternoon over his business, whatever it may be, and when he does get a holiday his natural impulse is to be doing something, pure idleness seems impossible to him, in fact it is positive unhappiness; for instance, what is a more difficult task than nursing and amusing a man compelled to a few weeks of idleness! Of course there are men whose position in life allows them to do what they like, and their one object seems to be to kill time by some means or other. Now with a woman all this is changed; to sit down and do nothing seems quite a natural thing, whether it is that her home duties allow her time to do so, or that her physical constitution tends that way, idleness to her is apparently an enjoyable luxury. Set down a man and woman and tell them there is absolutely nothing for them to do, the woman will sink into the nearest chair with great content, while the man wanders about restlessly making himself a nuisance to all around, and in all probability to himself also, until he finds something, however trivial, with which to occupy himself.

GERTRUDE.

"A woman's work is never done," even her leisure is filled with a hundred little domestic duties or social obligations, consequently the supreme joy of utter idleness is comparatively unknown to her. A man's work is more definite, condensed, and, whilst it lasts, engrossing; therefore at its conclusion the rebound is stronger, and he flies to complete relaxation of mind and body—usually in the form of a smoke or lounge—where the equivalent on a woman's part is probably sewing, letter-writing, or paying calls. A man can get through any amount of leisure, and can occupy himself quite happily and for any length of time in doing nothing—a woman, on the contrary, is seldom or never really idle, even when wasting time. Women are too intense, too energetic, to lounge through life; they enjoy being busy, though too often theirs is but a "busy idleness." Idleness, pure and simple, is either a gift or a fine art. It usually indicates the cultivation of a calm philosophy, the possession of a contented mind, and a satisfaction with life in general, and these qualities are more often possessed by men than women. This is probably because men, as a whole, have what they want, whilst women have still much to struggle for. Be that as it may, it is beyond dispute that the true "*dolce far niente*" is reserved for the "lords of creation," who appreciate it thoroughly, and certainly do not neglect its cultivation from their youth upwards.

MARY WADE EARP.

CONSIDERING idleness as a sheer lack of desire, not only for work, but for active occupation of any kind, in fact, considering bodily idleness, exclusively, we are forced to admit that it is more prevalent among men than women. In the poorer classes the moral of the old song is frequently reversed, for in many cases it is the women who work and the men who complain of hard times and hard masters, and who lounge the whole day through without lifting a finger to render their condition less miserable. The claims of husband and children are a strong argument in a woman's case against idleness, and the affections, slow to be stifled in the feminine heart, the most powerful tonic for the indolent nature. One of the chief components of a woman's character is restlessness; she has not the calm, placid nature of the man, who can take his ease, pipe in mouth, without resenting the monotony. She demands occupation of some description. Petty duties are the lot of women—great tasks the portion of man; if he renounce these he frequently falls to a state of idleness "never to rise again." To a woman's life, in which work is unknown, excitement must come to take its place, but few will be content to dream their lives away. Indeed, the outcry on all hands for work, even from those whose daily bread does not depend upon it, confirms the assertion that woman is not willingly an idle member of society.

MAUD M. ROGERS.



ATALANTA CLUB.

Subject for August: "Is sport (*i.e.* the killing of game) compatible with the progress of civilisation?" Papers must not exceed *two hundred and fifty words*, and must be sent in on or before August 25th. Prizes of five shillings will be awarded to each of the four best papers, which will be published in the body of the Magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

Give a humorous description of learning to ride a bicycle. Analyse the character of Catherine de Medici. Write an original Pantomime, example given on page 653. The subject for the School of Journalism will be discussion of some public abuse or grievance, the choice to be left to the writer. All papers must be sent in on or before August 25th. Essays must not exceed 500 words. Members may only enter for one of these subjects. Full rules for the above will be found among the advertising pages at the end of this number.

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (JULY).

I.

1. "Youth and Nature." Phillip Bourke Marston.
2. "Life Unlived." John Payne.
3. "Love's Martyrdom." Joseph Knight.

II.

1. "Gone." G. Wither.
2. "The Church." George Herbert.

III.

1. Alludes to a law among the Goths, always to choose a short, thick man for their king.
2. Psaphon, in order to attract the attention of the world, taught multitudes of birds to speak his name, and then let them fly away in every direction.

IV.

1. "The Dark Glass." D. G. Rossetti.
2. "True Woman." D. G. Rossetti.

V.

1. The almond tree with white flower blossoms on the bare branches.
2. Some naturalists have imagined that amber is a concretion of the tears of birds.

VI.

1. Dr. King, Bishop of Chichester. Born 1591.
2. King Charles I. Written in Carisbrook Castle.
3. S. J. Stone. *The Perfect Day*.

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR AUGUST.

I.

Give authors of quotations

1. "There never was nothing more me pain'd,
Nor more my pity mov'd,
As when my sweetheart her complain'd
That ever she me loved;
Alas! the while!"

2. "As I lay sleeping,
In dreams fleeting,
Ever my sweeting,
Is in my mind."

II.

Also these

1. "May never was the month of love,
For May is full of flowers;
But rather April, wet by kind,
For love is full of showers."
2. "Now Night her dusky mantle folds,
The Larks are soaring high;
And Morn her golden shafts has shot,
To gild the eastern sky;"

III.

1. Explain the meaning of the quotation, and where it is found
"With belt of brodered crape,
And fur-bound bonnet of Bucharian shape."

2. What is meant by "Brahma's burning founts"?

3. What is the meaning of "Khorassan"?

IV.

Give authors of quotations

1. "Pledge the memory of the brave,
And the spirits of the dead!
Pledge the venerable grave,
Valour's consecrated bed."

2. What is meant by the lines—
"Oh! 'tis the dream of happiness, to feign
Sorrow in joy, and court a thorn for pain."

V.

1. Who was the lady mentioned in the lines—
"Earle Percy is into his garden gone,
And after him walks his faire ladie;"
2. Who was Tamburlayne?

VI.

1. What was the term "Noontide hag"?
2. What is meant by the term "Lellie's Yell"?
3. What are the terms "Mozo and Muchacha" synonymous with?



A SONG OF SEASONS.

SPRING with her cowslip-balls.
Swallows from over sea,
Green ivy on the walls ;
Spring and the lilac tree.

Summer, with listless hand
Largesse of roses fine,
Flings to the waiting land ;
Summer, and sops-in-wine.

Autumn bears bearded wheat
Home in her loopèd gown :
Under her naked feet
Leaves rustle crisp and brown.

Then the year's widow pale
Winter, in whitest weeds
Under her shrouding veil
Keeps warm the baby seeds.

NORA HOPPER.



DAYDREAMS.

By Mrs. Percy Dearmer.

SWEETHEARTS AND FRIENDS.

CHAPTER XV.

"How sweet are looks that ladies bend
On whom their favours fall,
For them I battle to the end."

WESTMINSTER is a place to think in, to dream in—if one happens not to know it too well. Thorney Isle, lonely and desolate, but visited at dead of night by an Apostle known only to the ferryman, when the first Saxon Church was hallowed, Thorney Isle has seen the pageant of England's growth in those twelve hundred years' ago; through it has throbbled, as through the main artery to a heart, through the Abbey, the Hall, and St. Stephen's, the strong, deep pulse of national life.

For a young woman still capable of enthusiasm, it was a great moment when she climbed for the first time to the Ladies' Gallery of the House of Commons, and looked down upon the assembled legislators. What if the walls, which rang with the eloquence of Pitt and Fox, and witnessed the long strife of the Civil War, were there no more? Historic unity was unbroken; the mantle of old association has fallen upon the newer building.

After all, is not the floor of the House like some gay listed ground of old, the members like mail-sheathed knights with silken scarves and drooping plumes, waiting with beating pulses and lance in rest, the herald's signal to charge? Does not the Speaker's silence say, like the herald's trumpet and voice, "Brave knights, there is glory to win! Gallant knights, do your *devoir*! Strike for your ladies and do valiantly. Life is only once to lose, but glory never dies!" For gay balconies lined with ladies there was the gallery cage; for the applause of multitudes the pressmen's reports. But every knight might have his own lady in his heart. All save one, who

"Perforce must plunge his lance-point
In his own accusing heart."

So greatly was she impressed by this, it was distressing to Miss Amy Langton to hear Mrs. St. Luke's careless observations on the expressive stammer of one honourable member, the part played by another's eyeglass in the legislation of his country, the strange adventures of another's hat, the expression latent in yet another's handkerchief. Strange and wonderful it was to reflect how great a part these harmless looking people in chimney-pot hats and ugly garments were playing.

"Who is that dark young man on the Government side?" asked Mrs. St. Luke, the well-known first woman physician.

"That," she replied, with a flush of pride, "is the man you were speaking of, the member for Dalesby."

"To be sure, the writer of 'Some cankers in civilisation.' Engaged to Mrs. Fitzwilliam's protégée, fast little Lettice Marshall. Poor man! we shall hear some exalted sentiments from that young gentleman, Amy, if he says anything. And when the breach of promise is before us, we shall hear, but not from him, all the old cheap pleasantries on our poor sex and all the old namby pamby sentiment. And I prophesy that twenty years from this year of grace 1879, the same stale jokes and the same cheap twaddle on the same subject—and which the average male cannot take seriously—will be uttered in this same place.* This Mr. Lester looks as if he had just stepped out of a mediæval romance. Female Suffrage would be to his advantage."

"He is against the Cause, and his Political Economy is unsound," returned Amy, with deep gravity.

The business transacted below was not of absorbing interest; something about herrings. An honourable member got on his legs to ask why a British General with a tiny force had been defeated in Africa; he heard that Government intended to know the reason why. Another asked if Government knew

* Fulfilled in February, 1897.

that a perverse subject had had the audacity to starve? Government promised to look into it.

Honourable members put interminable questions upon every conceivable subject; an excited Irishman got out of order; an honourable member appealed to the Speaker so informally that he was called to order. All in vain did the Speaker, contrary to his usual silence, maintain that the honourable member who had appealed to him was in order, and signify that he should continue his observations; cries of "order," interruptions from honourable members calling him to order for every word, and each called to order by others, produced the effect of a general *mélée*, amid which, ever and anon, rose the voice of the Speaker, like the herald's trumpet, and crying of the rules of the tourney. Some honourable members coughed, some laughed, some talked. There were cheers, counter cheers, ironical cheers. In '79 the Closure had not been adopted. Mrs. St. Luke was delighted. "We have come in for the rarest fun; an unusual scene," she whispered.

"But what is it all about? Who is offended? They seem bent on a row," Amy asked.

Gradually the storm subsided, the Speaker confirmed the remarks of an honourable member, to the effect that the excited Irishman had put himself out of order by addressing the leader of the House instead of the Chair, that by some fatality every member who attempted to call any other to order had himself fallen out of order; somebody apologised to somebody; everybody appeared satisfied, peace was restored, when it occurred to a distinguished honourable member on the Opposition benches that the excited Irishman's remarks had been received with derision, and that excited Irishmen's remarks usually were received with derision by the Government side. So there was a second row.

"The debate will be tame after this," ladies whispered in their cage.

At last the repeal of the Breach of Promise Act was moved. On one side, the undesirability of seeking balm for broken hearts in the shape of hard cash; on the other, the necessity of chastising heartless betrayers amusing themselves at the expense of women's happiness, prospects, even reputation, was set forth. A plain, common-sense speaker described the Act as "a law to oblige a man who has made a mistake to render two lives miserable." Many other sensible and calm things this man said, that such actions were resorted to only by the mercenary and the unworthy; that those whose hearts were really hurt would not expose wounds to public gaze; that no modest woman would let her name be dragged through Courts of Justice; that the law was a snare into which unsuspecting men were driven by wily schemers.

It was said in return that the last was an abuse, to which all things are liable; that the action was usually forced upon women by relatives; that the law did not seek to give balm to wounded affections, but compensation for ruined careers; that a jilted woman rarely has second chance of marriage, which, in many cases, means livelihood; and that working women throw up their employments on the prospect of marriage, and if not unable to resume them, at least lost time and credit. He also commented on the inconstancy of his sex and the necessity of punishing triflers with female affections. Both gentlemen spoke without passion or levity and in a tone of which even the Immaculate approved, so that the debate promised to be very dull.

Then a melancholy person with a forlorn bachelor air, spoke of the perils of the unprotected male in a world consisting chiefly of powerful and scheming females, most of whom made it their business to marry; remarks which commanded the sympathetic attention of the House. Justice, he said, was not to be obtained in a Court consisting entirely of male creatures, when the complainant or the defendant was of the softer

sex; the difficulty was increased tenfold when the female complainant or defendant was possessed of personal charms, "and what woman" he pathetically asked, "is not?" (Hear, hear! Cheers and laughter). "What chance of justice" he demanded "would a man have against a not absolutely hideous person in petticoats and tears?" And he added with pathos, "they are so rarely hideous." Therefore, he required the abolition of the process on account of its injustice.

This was promptly met by a spirited champion, armed with statistics of damages granted to men; he made fun of the honourable member of bachelor aspect, and said nothing in particular in an amusing way.

The next speaker said that public opinion kept gentlemen from breaking engagements, while the lower classes worked too hard to have fine feelings. He thought it an interference with the liberty of the subject to investigate these matters. He spoke of the cruelty of reading love-letters in Court. "What honourable member" he asked with emotion, "would care to have his own effusions confided to the public ear?" (Hear, hear!) Someone replied that it might improve their style. (No, no! Hear, hear! Laughter).

Then rose a shrewd and worldly honourable member, who had never been in earnest about anything, even dinners or bets, and who had a command of measured speech and a fund of humour. Honourable members chuckled or laughed outright while he darted shafts of bright-pointed sarcasm at every weakness of the frailer sex, for whom he appeared to have an amused, half-tolerant contempt. There was not a smile in the Ladies' Gallery. The honourable member for Dalesby scowled savagely at him. He pictured man a great-hearted, generous Samson, perpetually victimised by the wiles of astute and scheming Dalilahs. He maintained that the process for breach of promise gave more power to the already too-powerful woman. He quoted Samson Agonistes with

a humorous application. He called upon the laws of his country to defend helpless man, against strong woman; thus he descanted on the love of change natural to man, which led him to make many essays in courtship before finally deciding on a wife. He appealed to honourable members to consider the ease with which man was ensnared by bright eyes and pink and white face. "Shall a man," he asked, "pay so great a penalty for the folly of a moment?"

"Yes," replied the member for Dalesby, catching the Speaker's eye, "He shall suffer for the term of his life." For men were fickle, he maintained, they were heartless and selfish in their dealings with women. He said hard things of Milton, maintained that his poetry, happiness and moral dignity were marred by his want of chivalry. He censured the cowardice of men who trifled with the affections, of beings more emotional, more dependent upon affection for happiness, beings condemned by nature to weakness and suffering, and less able to resist the pain of betrayal, beings whose reputation was so susceptible of stain, and often tarnished even by a broken contract, beings whose affections were purer, more constant and unselfish than those of men. Men made such promises too lightly. In the higher classes he thought honour and deference to public opinion were a check; in the lowest he would recommend kicking; but in the lower middle classes, the action for breach of promise was the best check. He warmed to his work, words came readily, previous speakers, especially the last flippant man, were severely handled. Presently the word Honour set him on fire; he quoted Burke's lament over the ashes of dying chivalry, the "chastity of honour that felt a stain like a wound," finishing with a glowing peroration on that burning, beautiful theme.

It was spirited; it was a surprise and a success; it carried hearers with it, proving that he could interest people and make them listen, that he could be savagely sarcastic.

The velvety voice could ring, it could rise and fall, penetrate and persuade.

To a young woman in the Gallery, it proved that there was only one man in the whole world, and that she loved him with all her heart. "For he is worth it," she thought gladly and proudly.

CHAPTER XVI.

"But for loving, why, you would not, sweet,
Though we prayed you,
Paid you, brayed you
In a mortar for you could not, sweet."

"Now, Vif, let us talk it over. You may smoke—do what you like, only do not, my dear, dear boy, do not throw your life away on a mad punctillo!"

"Dear Aunt Evelyn, you are most kind, but I'm old enough and bold enough to take care of myself."

Lady Evelyn Lester had been a beauty, much like the Immaculate, her godson; she was handsome still.

"It is useless to tell you," she continued, "that a career is before you. That Loughborough will one day be in office, that not only he, but all of them, have their eyes upon you. But I will say this, would any girl with a grain of self-respect like to know that she was married, not for love, but loyalty?"

"No lady that I am acquainted with, will ever know any such thing."

"Vivian, this marriage will be wretched, *she* will be wretched, your ways will be misery to her; if she cared for you it would be different. But she does not. Would she have refused to go with you and our party the other night on the plea of a headache, and then appeared with the Fitzwilliam clan, flirting with that wretched young Lovelace? Of breeding I will say nothing. But does that argue love? In public, before your eyes! Such a marked insult.

"This is painful," he replied, "No more, pray."

"You poor dear boy. How I should like

to ship you somewhere across the world, and keep you there, till she had run away with somebody else."

Hapless Immaculate! Having lunched with his relatives, he dined at Notting Hill, bearing a bouquet of white moss roses for Lettice, some of which he was allowed to place in her hair, thinking how well her girlish grace, and the pure colouring in her simple white dress harmonised with the pure white roses in their cool sheath of green.

On turning from this delightful task, Lester bent over a vase of crimson and gold roses, inhaling their scent. "It is coals to Newcastle, to give you flowers, Lettice," he said. "Perhaps a secret sympathy attracts like to like."

She smiled with conscious power and secret amusement. Lovelace had given her the red roses.

Then they dined with the usual discomfort peculiar to that house, and Lettice resigned herself to a dull evening at home with her future husband.

"You were very good about the other night," she said, when they were sitting apart together in the last sunbeams, while Mrs. Marshall discreetly dozed on the sofa. Major Marshall was in his study, and Arthur dining out. She spoke almost tenderly, Lester was touched. "I felt so sure that you had good cause for changing your mind," he replied, intending no sarcasm.

"Poor Char!—Mr. Lovelace, how all this jealousy would amuse and flatter him!" Lettice said.

"He shall enjoy the flattery no longer," he exclaimed with a subdued fierceness that frightened her. "Do you know, Lettice, gossip links his name with yours?"

"You make so much of things. And you are so cross and unkind to-night," she pouted. "And after I have been nice to you, and said I was sorry!"

The Immaculate had turned away, he was looking thoughtfully out of the window, "Thanks, dearest, so that is at an end. Now I am going to speak to you very

seriously," he said later, after a very solemn pause of apparent reflection.

"I knew you were going to worry me to-night, the moment I saw your grave face. You are getting tired of me, Vivian, and you want to quarrel and part us—just like a man—so selfish!" Tears rose and streamed over her face, but quite becomingly.

"This is unjust," he said, with affected indifference, "dearest, I seek no quarrel. I always was, and always will be true to you."

"Then why are you so cross and hard?" she sobbed; but I know *somebody* who loves me."

"Let us have done with misunderstandings and be at peace, Letty, dear. As your future husband, I have rights; those rights I insist upon."

"Oh!" returned poor little Lettice, awed by his cool manner and devoured by vague terror, "You frighten me so.—You are so much cleverer, stronger, and older—"

"Dearest, I only wish to protect and cherish you," he said gently. "Those are the rights I insist upon, sacred, precious rights, Lettice, believe me."

These words were not without effect; she was both abashed and comforted by them, and looked up at him with a smile of confidence and real affection shining through her tears, which, of course, had to be kissed away.

"I don't know how you ever came to choose me, Vivian," she said humbly, after this interesting rite.

"But I *have* chosen you and you have accepted me, now all we have to do is to consider our duty to each other."

"Duty! oh! Vif! You speak so like a sermon," she said, looking so charming and so pitiful that he could not help kissing the fragile hand he held in his.

"Supposing you were my wife, now, don't you think we should get on better?" he asked.

"No, I don't want to be married yet."

"Let us try the experiment of marrying, at all events. Say this day month, Lettice."

"Oh! I can say nothing, Mamma must manage that," she replied, appearing to yield in a cloud of blushes, but secretly convinced that Mamma would soon put a stop to such nonsense as that. "You shall never regret it, Letty dear," he said with earnest tenderness after another caress.

"To think that I should go so near to loving a man!" Lettice was musing, as they sat hand in hand, in the silence that followed.

At this interesting moment the door opened, and Mrs. Cecil Langton came in. Mrs. Marshall awoke and exclaimed at the darkness; the lovers moved apart; Vivian obeyed an injunction to ring the bell. Letty went to the piano and began strumming, regretting her too great lenity towards her lover. "It will never do to be in love with one's husband," she mused.

Then Lester drew a chair to Mrs. Marshall's side and told her of Lettice's consent. Mrs. Marshall objected, and talked of trousseaux, breakfasts and guests, but Lester pleaded so earnestly that she might be married anyhow, even in sackcloth, so long as she was married quickly, that Mrs. Marshall gave in, a happy inspiration showing this to be a brave way out of trousseau difficulties. Tea and lights followed; Mrs. Cecil Langton poured grievances into her mother's ear; Lettice poured out tea, when a man entered, unannounced; it was Mr. Lovelace. Mrs. Marshall shivered; Lettice was delighted; to see these two men before her and play them off one against the other was just what she had been longing for. "Now there will be some fun," she thought.

Lovelace took a seat by the tea maker with an air that made the Immaculate's blood boil. The new-comer lounged at his ease in a deep chair, yawned, and addressed his remarks wholly to Lettice, who had plenty of smiles for him, and thought it a good opportunity to put Lester on the rack.

The latter glared savagely at his rival, and, turning his back on him, addressed his con-

versation to his hostess, who was too frightened to listen, while the Immaculate was pre-occupied in remembering that he had not insisted upon those pre-conjugal rights of which he had spoken, Lettice's unwonted sweetness having beguiled him from the subject. He felt all the time through the back of his head the glances and mutual smiles passing between Lettice and Lovelace. "What jolly tea you make!" was one of this amiable gentleman's harmless remarks, to which the tone and look gave weight.

Mr. Charles Lovelace confined his admiration to the objects of other people's; the fact of a woman's being admired by another man, were she dull as a wet day and ugly as a railway station, was enough to make him desire her affections. This was the secret of his five years' philandering with Georgie Langton. Georgie attracted a continual stream of worshippers; no sooner did one try to bring things to a climax than Mr. Lovelace appeared with an intimation that the property was booked. The adorer driven away, Mr. Lovelace's affection cooled, till a new one appeared, when the old game was played again. Lettice shared this charming weakness. Having heard of Lovelace as the lawful spoil of Georgie, she at once felt the necessity of winning him. So this pretty pair were pitted against each other in a sort of duel, each bent on capturing the heart of the other for the refined amusement of throwing it away. The presence of Lester stimulated the good Lovelace to renewed ardour, while a rumour that Lovelace was now formally engaged to Georgie had the same effect on Lettice.

The Immaculate affected not to observe Lovelace, when he was warbling duets with Lettice and bending, being short-sighted, over the golden head in which Lester had just placed the moss-rose, in a way that made the latter green with indignation. But in truth he could see and feel nothing but those warblers; and the sight of Lettice's sweet face raised to the ardent glances of Lovelace at last became so intolerable that he left the

room and went out into the smoky strip of back garden, where a feline concert was going on, to calm his emotions and bring himself to think gently of Lettice. How sweet she had been in those few twilight moments! Was that, too, only a piece of coquetry?

When he returned, Lovelace had taken his leave, highly gratified with his evening's amusement. Mrs. Marshall was gone to bed with some slight ailment, Mrs. Cecil Langton again in the nursery; Lettice was alone, half triumphant, half frightened, and ostensibly engrossed in needlework.

"Well! Vif!" she said airily, "You soon got tired of my society."

He looked sternly upon her half saucy, half shrinking and wholly charming face as he replied, "On the contrary, I had too little of it to be tired."

"You were horribly rude to poor Mr. Lovelace," she pouted.

"I felt rude. Had I remained in sight of that conceited and insufferable ass, I should have had to smash him to atoms."

She laughed a delicious laugh of amused triumph.

"When you promised to be my wife just now," continued Lester with an intent gaze, that she attributed to admiration, "I almost thought you loved me."

"Really!" responded Lettice with a pretty curl of her lip.

"But when I saw you with that—that—unspeakable ass," he went on with gathering indignation, "nothing could keep me from thinking that your feeling for him at least *appeared* similar to your feeling for me."

"You accuse me of caring for him!" returned Lettice with sudden anger. "Ah! perhaps you feel he is more fitted to win hearts than *some* people."

"If I, who have every reason to believe the contrary," here his gaze became so intense that Lettice shrank under it, "cannot refrain from unjust suspicions—what wonder that people couple your names?"

"Who cares if they do?" she retorted,

watching her victim's writhings with complacency.

"I care. Therefore I insist upon your giving up his acquaintance."

"Do you insist upon anything else?" she asked, with a teasing smile, and a delightful consciousness of power.

"I insist upon your dropping Mrs. Fitzwilliam."

"And you think I am so simple as to give in to your insistings? Up in the clouds as usual, Vif. What do you know of women?"

"All that I know of women depends on you," he replied, turning pale. "Women have great moral power over men, Lettice; a man's estimate of the sex depends on his wife; his own moral status on that."

"What dry stuff you talk to-night!" she returned, suppressing a yawn.

"Will you do this for me or will you not?" he asked.

"I will not."

"If you refuse me this one favour now, how will you learn to obey me as a wife?"

"Just as if I had the smallest intention of obeying you as a wife!"

"Yet you have promised to become my wife this day month——"

"Indeed, I promised nothing of the kind. Silence doesn't always give consent."

"Will you promise now?"

"Not I."

"My dear child, will you speak seriously?"

"I don't know that I will," she replied airily, holding her work to one side to study its effect, and thinking how desperately in earnest her victim was. "If you don't like me, Vif, you can leave me."

"Do you mean that?" he asked in a stifled voice, "Are we really to part?"

"Just as you like. What do I care?"

"I cannot think that you love me, Letty," he replied, his large dark eyes luminous with emotion, his features full of pathos.

She longed to throw her arms round his neck and protest that she loved him with all her heart; but vanity and the coquette's

wayward desire to play her fish as long as possible, restrained her.

"Everything I do offends you and sets you preaching; you expect me to be as dull and dreary as yourself. What a pity you didn't fall in love with a prim girl like your paragon Amy. I like fun and pleasure and a little quiet flirtation."

His cheek flushed. "We have made a mistake," he replied. "I see that it is not in my power to make you happy. But I will not make you miserable; you shall have your freedom, Lettice, if you wish it."

"Thanks. I always meant to take it," returned Lettice drily.

"Must we part then?" he asked in a tremulous voice.

"If you like."

"Will you not—change a little—for my sake?"

"No I won't. And I won't be teased any longer. If you don't like me you can leave me," she replied with sudden temper.

He was standing very stiffly before her, not far from the door; had he been farther from it their fates might have been different. He bowed, turned and went, with a brief farewell that completely took her by surprise.

But when the door had closed upon him and she found herself alone in the dimly-lighted room, the meaning of the scene flashed through her. "He is gone! Oh! Vif!" she cried, springing to her feet. It was real love now, or at least as much of it as her weak and wayward heart was capable of.

CHAPTER XVII.

"I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not Honour more."

The bright sweetness of September lay on the country; slopes dipping down to the river dale showed a pale gleam of harvested fields; here and there a spot of vivid orange or gold glowed like a flame in dark, thick foliage. Far away to the east, the strip of sea visible from Baron's Cleeve looked like a still cloud of azure air, the pale sky, stainless

overhead, darkened into purple mist on the horizon. An exquisite hush had fallen on weary Nature; it was a time for quiet musings and peaceful dreams, a pensive time, grave, not sad. The garden terraces at Baron's Cleeve glowed brighter than ever at this season, as if with a last supreme effort; myrtles were still in bloom, fruit hung rich in orchards and on walls, late roses exhaled the last sweetness of summer, a Virginia creeper twined among the ivy on the grey stone house had changed to fiery red in the last few days.

Here Amy Langton was snatching a brief holiday before the winter work. She was very tired, the romance of daring an unusual life in the teeth of opposition had evaporated with the novelty of it, leaving a barren stretch of grey, uninviting duty behind. Life seemed nothing but perpetual labour, all illusions and loveliness crushed beneath the grim monotony of work. Everybody experiences such moods at times. Two days before Georgie's wedding day, in the middle of August, all at Angel Road had been petrified by the announcement that Lettice and Mr. Lovelace had made a stolen match, a humiliation that Georgie bore with more spirit than could have been expected, going off with her mother and sister on a Continental tour that she heartily enjoyed. Amy had now no family life, she never could have one, there were other, more congenial daughters in the home in which she had felt herself so superfluous. Sitting on the terrace that afternoon, she thought and thought of these things, while she wrote to Louisa, who had already married and gone on her wedding tour, one of those long letters that astonish the male mind. She wrote on till shadows lengthened, sunlight softened, swallows twittered in airy squadrons over the water in the valley below. Then she heard the sound of wheels on the gravel, Steven's whistle through the house, her brother's deep voice and his wife's clear laugh in the hall.

A moment after there was a quick, light step on the terrace, at which her eyes turned

to fire, her face to momentary crimson; the whole world changed from greyness to glory. The Immaculate would have been more or less than human had he not known that his unexpected appearance had produced all that radiance and agitation in the face before him. But he only said, as he warmly clasped the hand offered him, "I drove over with your brother to dine. They said I should find you here." And she only replied that she was glad, and that the afternoon was pleasant. Then he took a seat near her, bent towards her, his hands clasped lightly in front of him and watched her with kindling eyes, while she folded her closely-written foreign sheets, put them in an envelope and addressed them.

"I need not ask to whom," he said, when the superscription was begun.

"Indeed, I hope you would not be so rude," she replied, "we should never again call you the Immaculate."

"Do I deserve it? Am I indeed such a prig?"

"I decline to gratify a morbid vanity by a denial, Mr. Lester. You need not look so pathetic about it."

"Can I help it when you are so severe?" he replied. "Dr. Amy," he added, after some happy, silent minutes, "Do you remember our last holiday at Baron's Cleeve?"

"Quite well. Have you a foreign stamp?"

"Two pennies and a halfpenny, if they will serve."

"Thank you. Plenty of room."

"You would have nothing to say to me, then: Well! It had to be put up with. It was hard, for I was always attracted to you Amy; your friendship has been and is the most precious thing in my life; but——"

"I am glad, so glad, and proud too. I always liked you, even when you scolded me most. Your errors are so respectable, even venerable—precious heirlooms from your forefathers, dear Mr. Lester."

"Come, come, come! 'venerable errors'; you are too severe, dear prophetess."

"Hit back, then. Have your revenge."

She laughed and looked up with gay defiance; he looked grave, wistful, a little bewildered.

They were on the same terrace on which they had so often met on sunny afternoons, on which she had thrown roses at him, on which he appealed to her to give up her career. They remembered it all. She was sitting in the shadows of the fig-trellis, some late rose petals had fallen on the turf, a sunbeam gleamed through the trellis upon her hair.

"Dearest prophetess," the Immaculate said with a tremble in his beautiful velvet voice, and a still flame in his beautiful pansy eyes, "this friendship, this beautiful, precious friendship—is—on my part—something more. It is love."

She covered her face with her hand. He thought—or was it the effect of a quivering sunbeam through the fig-trellis?—still he thought there was something like a sob in the quick breath and heaving breast.

"No," she said faintly at last, "Not love, dear Vivian, never that, between us."

"Yes, Amy, that, always that, dearest, nothing less. Take it, darling, take it and keep it for ever and ever." As he spoke he slid softly,—and, of course, with perfect grace—to one knee on the turf at her feet. Their faces were quite close, the beating of their hearts was audible to each. The Immaculate was really too beautiful for words. Surely none but a fiend *could* resist him. Was Dr. Langton a tigress? Was her heart made of cast iron, of Portland stone? At this enchanting moment, these verses floated through her mind.

"All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
Are all but ministers of love
And feed his sacred flame."

They carried her spirit to a sunny morning in the Riviera; she heard the hum of bees in thyme and the soft wash of blue waves on the hidden shore. She choked down a rising sob, gently repulsed an arm that was stealing round her and said, "It is September. In January you *adored* Lettice Marshall. In

August, only a month ago, she was your promised wife."

"Nay. That was—illusion—not love."

"This too is illusion," said the fiendish young female, austerely, "Don't spoil our beautiful friendship, Vivian. What a tale I heard under the olives that evening, and what an awful cold I had next day! Not only the most beautiful but the best of her sex. I couldn't rise anywhere near to the level; couldn't enter into the raptures in the least. I was held a publican and sinner."

"What a—what a—fool I was!" muttered the Immaculate, using a quite unpresentable word, "Darling, listen—"

"I am listening. I listened then. I listened in the cage in the House of Commons, and I heard all the fine things you said about men's levity and their light way of promising marriage."

"True. But I've eaten a peek of salt with you, dearest. I've studied your character thoroughly. Haven't you refused me already, years ago, on this very spot? But I must confess this. That old illusion didn't last. That box on the ear—and the dog's bite—you remember, poor little Angela?—killed it. It was all a struggle and duty after that."

"Oh! Oh! Our perfect knight, our Immaculate, telling such—such awful—lies!"

"Oh! not lies! the illusion returned and returned, the charm of beauty and grace and supposed love; but it always had to be wooed back. Forget it, dear. Try to love me a little, be my wife, be Angela's mother."

"It will not do, Vivian, we should not even agree in educating Angela. Dear, I am not fit wife for you, I could not devote myself. I cannot give up my profession. My interests would clash with yours. My profession—"

"Ah! but love is better. Try to love me, my own prophetess. If devotion, if love can make happiness, mine must and will make you happy, dearest."

"Is happiness the best thing, or duty, Vivian?"

"Love is both. My life, my happiness, the child's—all is in your hands."

In this strain the Immaculate pleaded long and beautifully, and one cannot help thinking that it must have taken a heart of adamant or of a demon, to resist such ideal love-making from such an ideal lover. Yet, this fiendish young female, to her lasting discredit, one thinks accomplished this dreadful feat.

She had devoted her life, she said, to a serious study of one of the most noble arts and crafts; she was bound to pursue it; her mother looked to her after so much vexation and disappointment for help. "Think" she said, "of the degraded, stunted, wasted lives of innumerable middle-class women, who cannot possibly marry, purely because there are not enough men to marry them. Think of the immense difficulties and obstacles that a few women have surmounted in the task of opening up new lines of usefulness to these women and removing the stigma from female erudition and labour! Picture the great mass of hopeless, superfluous spinsters 'withering on the stalk!' Think of the complex tangle of misery and vice resulting from wretched marriages, from the union of men and women without one taste or aim in common. Dear Vivian, think of the wretched marriage from which *you* have just escaped, and consider if this is a time for women to snatch at personal happiness, when they have gone as far, suffered as much, and made others to suffer as much as I have. I cannot, I must not, dare not give it up, my friend. Choose another wife. You are young, you are— attractive. You need a different kind of wife."

Poor, dear Immaculate, he knew it was useless to say more; so he thought a great deal instead. The terrace was quite in shadow before they left it; the distant sea a cloud of softest rose, over which flitted a crimson sail; the scent of fig leaves, roses and over-blown myrtle on the parapet, mingled with mignonette and almond of elenatis from below; the hushed air had a sparkle of coming frost in it, the purple-misted hill-tops touched a pale, translucent sky, all the west was crimson and gold. Robins sang their

cheery Good-night, grasshoppers chirped faintly, swallows, clouded the flushed sky in twittering masses. The rejected and the rejector strolled amicably back to the house in the crimson glow.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"For Love in sequel works with Fate
To draw the evil from hidden worth."

Life is not long enough to chronicle all the Immaculate's virtues and excellencies; it is fatiguing to have to observe that he bore his refusal in the most perfect manner; dined with the family immediately after as if nothing had happened; made himself as agreeable to all members, including the schoolboys home for the holidays, as usual, and sang charmingly to Mrs. Langton's accompaniment; while the stony-hearted friend who repulsed him, instead of tearing her hair, smiting her breast, and wearing sackcloth in remorse, selected her favourite frock, dressed her hair with the greatest art of which she was capable, and wore a string of pearls round her neck. What devilry might be hidden under these tactics, no one knows. They were not wholly unnoticed by the Immaculate, who probably drew his own conclusions.

"Have you any objection to my marrying your stepsister, Langton?" he casually asked his host that night over an after-dinner cigar.

"Certainly not; nothing would give me greater pleasure. But you know Amy takes herself and her physic very seriously. She is going to save society by the practice of medicine. And really she is a sensible woman, and probably knows best what she and the rest of them are fit for, as I often tell her mother, who can't make her out. My wife backs her up through thick and thin, she goes solid for female emancipation; though, as Mrs. Langton rules despotically over everyone in this house, I don't know what she is to be emancipated from. But do you think Amy cares for you, Lester? She is simply immense about men."

"Your sister," the Immaculate replied,

tranquilly, "has already done me the honour of refusing me twice. I hope I am not vain, Langton, but I can't help thinking these facts impressive," he added with a smile of deadly malignity.

They seldom met after this idyllic episode. Once, in the course of a Parliamentary enquiry, by Commission, into the condition of East End needle-women, there was a public meeting in connection with it, several ladies being on the platform, as well as the member for Dalesby and his uncle, Lord Loughborough. The well known face and figure of Mrs. St. Luke, M.D., appeared there amongst those of younger women.

"I say, Vif," the uncle whispered to him, "these women do the thing deuced well; so quiet and business-like. But Mrs. St. Luke is a veteran speaker."

"After all, why should they not? Who has a cooler, clearer head than Aunt Evelyn?" the nephew replied. Lady Evelyn was her brother's right hand; she coached him, prompted him, suggested things to him, was worth, he sometimes said—but not to her—ten secretaries. It was, "Evie, I want collieries got up," or "I want the whole history of Cyprus by to-morrow night." "Get me a précis of Derby's administrations," or "Evie just get up Irish land tenures," or "What the dickens am I to say at this Conservative meeting?" "Let me have 'Peace with Honour' in five epigrams at once, my dear." She never failed him; these things kept her young and preserved her beauty. Her ungrateful brother sometimes asked what women could want with the franchise while they had such powers and opportunities as these? Besides, he would add, to clinch the matter, he had no franchise; why should women want what was denied to peers of the realm? This dreadful man seldom met women upon platforms; but the question under present discussion almost excused their presence even to him and his fastidious nephew.

Presently Mrs. St. Luke whispered something to a young woman at her side, who rose

and left the platform, returning shortly after with a bundle of papers. She was tall, she walked well, with an air of distinction, taking her publicity as a matter of course without a grain of self-consciousness.

"Who is that young goddess?" Lord Loughborough whispered, and his nephew pencilled a name printed on the programme, Miss A. Langton, M.D. The name was just then spoken by the Chairman, who called on her to read her report; upon which, still keeping her eyes on her papers, she stood up in her place and began, without agitation, the usual "Mr. Chairman," etc., read out her paper very calmly, and sat down again. At all the "Hear, hears!" groans, "Shame!" and cheers, she waited till the tumult subsided, and went steadily on. This little experience was very good for the Immaculate's morals.

"After all," his uncle said later, "the Queen beats them all at public reading and speaking." "And us, too," added the Perfect Knight.

The exchange of a bow and smile, and an effort by the Immaculate to find her cloaks and cabs, comprised the whole personal intercourse between these lovers; officially, the member for Dalesby had to question the accuracy and call for verification of some of Miss Langton's facts, which was all done decently and in order.

Who could imagine that, when this tall young woman was worried and over-tired oppressed by London fogs, depressed by the ills and sins and shames of poor humanity, she was in the habit of calling up the memory of a sunny terrace on a still September afternoon, scent of fig leaves, myrtle, mignonette, and roses, sound of twittering swallows, robins' songs and grasshoppers' chirp, and with them a velvety voice, passion thrilled, dark eyes, love lighted, and words such as are spoken once, forgotten never; or that the member for Dalesby, under similar circumstances, summoned the same scene to his reveries, substituting a woman's voice, clear and pure, but deepened

with feeling, and dark spiritual blue eyes, lighted by holy fire, for his own. Something else filled his reveries, a hand scarred by a dog's bite, the face of a tiny dark-eyed girl nestled beneath the intellectual face with sapphire eyes. Who could imagine that, after such reveries, earth to each seemed sweeter, Heaven nearer than before?

It was in the short, befogged days of late November that Amy Langton dined one night at Angel Road to meet the Australian brother, Algernon, whose wealth had proved to be largely based upon imagination. They met seldom, Amy was always immersed in business, Algernon's stay in England was only for a holiday. Julius was dining at home, too, the brothers and sister stayed chatting until midnight. Then Algernon and Amy drove away together, Julius being bound in another direction. The foggy day had given place to a clear, starry night with a sharp frost-bite in the air. It was pleasant to roll over the dry roads in the keen night; Algernon praising the Southern Cross and the brilliance of Australian skies, Amy vaunting Italian moonlight. But what is that sudden splendour in the north? An aurora borealis? No, for the leaping light is mingled with clouds of rolling smoke, the streets are red with it.

"It is a fire," the brother said, "somewhere by Cromwell Road. Amy, I *must* see that fire. You won't mind dropping me and driving on alone, will you?"

"Certainly not." Algernon alighted and melted into the crowd, a brown-bearded, brown-faced, athletic Australian, good at need.

The streets were soon dark streams of rushing humanity, with here and there a swifter central current of strong horses, tossing eager heads, with jingle of harness and rattle of engines, amid a galaxy of brazen helmets glittering in the fitful lustre. The Australian, following the stream, was soon borne on the human surge to the source of the sinister splendour, a mansion, two mansions, near Cromwell Road. The first

was "well alight" before an engine arrived; it was practically gone, almost gutted, in half-an-hour; the houses on either side were burning. The lion-like roar of the flame was emphasised by cracking timber, crashing masonry, amid popping, like single shots, human cries, orders, the steady thud-thud of engines and hiss of rushing water. Engine after engine clattered up, a moving splendour of brazen helms flashed here there and everywhere, from roof to pavement axes glittered in the frame as this and that threatening source of peril was hacked away, ladders shot up, the fire-escape did duty; buckets and hose rained till the streets ran red with flame-reflecting water and the surging crowd was swept back by the streams shot upon them.

Sometimes a groan rolled heavily over the crowd when inmates or firemen were seen in danger, then a cheer thundered up whenever the danger passed.

The fire was eating its savage way through Number Seven, Lord Loughborough's house, next to that in which the fire began. The lower stairs were gone. Some women servants and children asleep on the first floor had been roused at the first cry of fire and taken out safely, but a boy of seven was missing. The fire-escape was planted against the house, a fireman climbed up and returned empty-handed.

"Let me go, Fireman. I *know* he is there," cried a young man in evening dress, pushing the man aside and springing up the ladder, which was now swathed in smoke. He disappeared through a third-floor window; several seconds elapsed, during which the burning second floor gave way with a crash, a volume of flame shot up above it, the outer wall yielded, and, after tottering a minute, crashed in, the fire escape with it, just as the young man re-appeared, carrying something white, and greeted by a loud roar from the raging fire, in which a deep low groan from the crowd was swallowed. The window at which the man appeared was next the house corner, the fire had not yet reached it, but

was advancing with every second. The corner stood like a tottering tower, by a chasm of raging fire, that leapt high above it and poured sparks and flaming brands upon it. The young man was out on the balcony; he was seen to tie his burden—poor little distraught Harry, whom he found crouched in a corner, numb and idiotic with terror—to a sheet, which he let down, shouting for a mattress to break his fall. A mattress was held by many willing hands, the child was dropped and caught, the young man fell back half over the balcony and partly propped by the house wall.

“Jump,” they shouted from below, but he neither moved nor answered, he had been struck by a piece of charred wood carried up by the fire-draught like a scrap of paper and dropped.

“A ladder! A rope! The fire-escape!” cried confused voices. The fire had licked up that part of the balcony that was over the flames, the metal rails hung down, twisted like a wisp of straw.

“Throw a rope with a block,” one of the brigade in command ordered. It was done, it caught and ran down, but the man was motionless and helpless. The fire crept nearer; the corner tottered.

“Will no one fetch him?” “Is he dead?” “Will the rope bear?” was heard in many voices. Hose were directed in many streams on the doomed corner, the crowd was scourged back by the hose in readiness for the expected crash, when, with a wild cry of “For him or with him!” a woman in short skirts, dashed through hose-streams, policemen and firemen, caught the rope, swarmed up it like a cat and reached the tottering balcony in a few seconds. Catching the rope up, she passed it round the man’s body, bound it firmly and tried to lift him over. He fell helpless but not senseless, into her arms, just able to second her efforts by throwing his weight here and there; she got him over without a jerk, the rails gave and bent in the strain, flames leapt upon them, quenched again and again by the water. “Now

unclasp me,” she said to the dazed, exhausted man, who obeyed, swung free with a cry of agony, then sank swooning, as she paid the rope out from her torn hands, the top rails escaping the strain, as she leant back against the wall, bracing her feet against the bottom rail. Many willing arms supported the mattress that caught the injured man; the boom of a mighty cheer rolled round as he was safely received and quickly borne off, just as a gust of flame parted the rope that lowered him and a volume of smoke whirled round the corner, concealing the young woman in its black heart. Silence of horror fell upon those below; a big, brown-bearded man who had been lending a useful hand, shouted in a loud hoarse voice, “Jump, Amy, jump, for the love of Heaven!”

Area spikes, hot and hissing from water were under the mattress held for the other two, and which had been hurried away with the injured man upon it, the sheet that lowered the child was there, black and wet, scarcely discernible, but snatched by firemen held aloft and firmly supported in time to catch the girl, who saw, as the smoke eddied away from her, that there was no danger of striking the man she had rescued. Then she jumped, was caught by the edge of the sheet, bounded up, turned over in the air and fell, knocking a fireman down under her. By the time she struck the fireman in her fall, all behind was one mass of flame, and the corner of the house gone. From the time the rope was thrown over the balcony rail to the man’s complete rescue, five minutes; to Amy’s fall, seven.

Each was burnt and bruised, but poor brave Bayard had a broken leg, the blow on his head only stunned him. Julius helped to set the limb and waged a life-long war with his sister upon the causes that left a slight lameness, so beautifully managed by the Immaculate that it was converted to a grace, lending a new distinction to his carriage. Julius managed his sister’s sprained ankle and serious burns better. The lovers wrote

and heard of each other, but did not meet until both had recovered.

"You *must* marry me now, dearest," the Immaculate said on that august occasion, with outstretched arms. "I am your Frankenstein. You gave me life, I demand happiness."

"But honour and duty come first, I cannot give up my calling. As for love—"

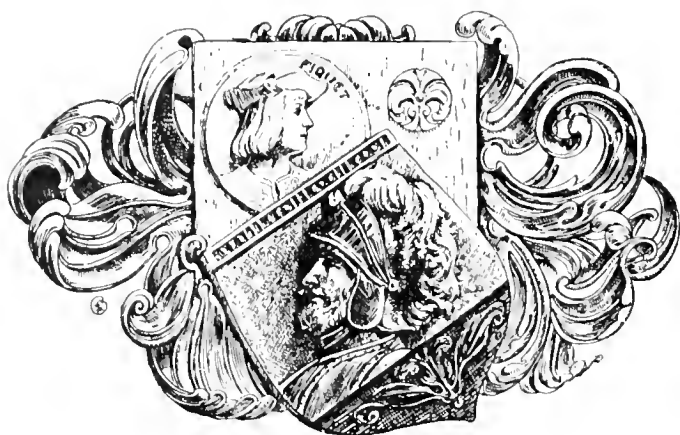
"My brave, beautiful prophetess, when I saw your face through the flames 'An angel yet yet a woman.'" Can we blame our proven perfect knight if his voice failed him here and tears sprang unbidden? "Amy, I am not the hide-bound, prejudiced ass I was. Love has taught me better, a woman's love and heroism. Dear, I will never hinder you, only give me the privilege of helping?"

"Oh! but I am not the wife you need—not the helpmate," she faltered.

"Just the wife, no other. As for obedience? Why not obey each other?"

"My own dear Bayard," she murmured humbly, as she glided into his tenderly passionate embrace; "my peerless, perfect knight!"

If the marriage proved a happy one; if the Immaculate became a statesman, lawyer, or scribbler of renown; if his virtues, cleared and settled by the ferment of youth, mellowed with years; if he and Amy became less dead-sure of their own opinions, more tolerant of other people's; of the manner in which he helped her to reconcile her wifely and professional duties, and to further the improvement of her sex, no authentic record is as yet discoverable.



SKETCHING FROM NATURE.

BY VAL DAVIS.

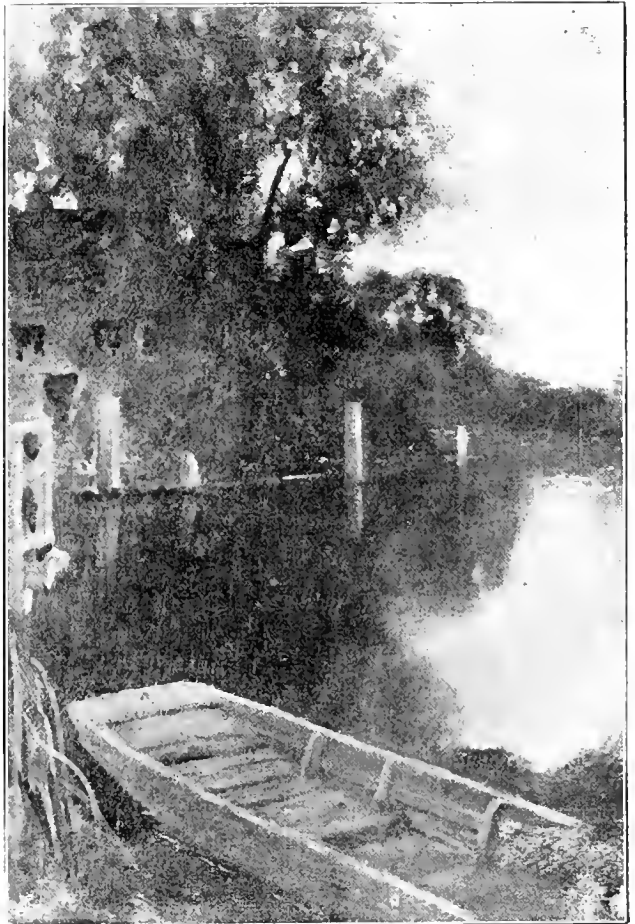
THE power to sketch from Nature is acquired only through practice in sketching from Nature! This dictum, though it savours somewhat of the story of the man who vowed never to bathe till he had learnt to swim, nevertheless contains one very practical truth, viz., that treatises, lectures and masters can no more impart to the shader the power to sketch than the sign-posts, fences and milestones by the roadside can convey the traveller to his destination. They do but point the way, mark the road, and record his progress.

Still, in spite of my rather discouraging exordium, I propose, through a page or two, to discuss in a more or less desultory mode, on some of the principles and ways and means incidental to our theme. I may as well open with just a few words about those attempts so frequently made to paint out-of-doors what are intended not as sketches or studies, but as finished pictures ready for exhibition.

My own theory is that the difficulties attending such efforts are almost insuperable, as will, I think, be seen when we come to consider what are the essential constituents of a good picture, viz., unity of effect, balance of lines and masses, harmonious colour, and an interesting and consistent effect of light and shade; whilst at the same time through this body or structure, so to speak, there must breathe and live that dominant idea or sentiment which the Germans describe as the "*Stimmung*." Now how obviously difficult must it not be to maintain harmony

of colour, when every tint in Nature varies from hour to hour, or unity of effort, when every passing cloud or gleam of sunshine kaleidoscopically reverses our *chiaroscuro*. And when, moreover, the very novelty of these changes tends to make them appear more beautiful than the effect originally chosen, so that like a band of Sirens, they dance round the distraught artist, tempting him this way and that, to the sad detriment of the aforesaid vivifying but coy and rather elusive "*Stimmung*."

The result of these circumstances becomes evident when at length, after perhaps weeks of earnest effort and labour, the *chef d'œuvre* is submitted in the studio to the criticism of



'HURLEY LOCK.

brother and sister brushes. Doubtless they try to be as lenient as their artistic consciences



BRAY CHURCH.

will allow, but what praise they can bestow is so mitigated by proviso and exception, by if and an, that it barely suffices to coat the various pills of advice now so liberally dispensed. Says critic No. 1: "That willow trunk on the right is capitally painted, but would it not come darker against such a bright light in the water." N.B. The light in the water was never seen after the first day, and had to be finished from memory—*hinc ille lacryme*. Number two is equally emphatic as to incorrect relative tones in the sunlit sky, and the meadow in middle distance, and again it has to be confessed that the meadow was painted when the sky was overcast. Critic number three does not condescend to details, but sums up with a generalisation that though the picture contains numerous bits of good work, it is all to pieces, and lackstone, etc.; and the artist finally emerges from it all limply, feeling that he has missed fire somehow.

Of course in our occasional fine summers,

we may be favoured with a long spell of steady weather, when one can work on the same picture from morning till noon without much change in colour or light and shade day after day. Still better in the winter, there frequently occurs weeks when each morning the artist finds his subject exactly as it looked the previous evening, and most important, has the same quiet, even light to paint it in; whereas summer sunlight is so very dazzling and confusing; it lends to the pigments the blue of the sky, the green of the trees, the depth of the shadows, till the canvas seems aglow with light and colour; alas, these beauties are but borrowed; indoors how dull and heavy what looked so fresh outside. And only experience can avail to teach us how to discount this mirage-like effect of the sunlight.

The splendid landscapes by Millais and others will be found almost invariably to have been painted under such conditions as above described, and therefore do not dispute my contention, as on first thoughts they might appear to do.

However, leaving these Olympian heights of theory, I will come to humbler but more practical details as to boxes, paints, mediums,



A SMOOTH TIDE.

etc. Now one of the most frequent questions put to me by the ardent novice is as to the



RIXLIP LAKE.

respective advantages of oil or water colour for sketching. That depends on the individual, as also on the purpose of the sketch, but it may be laid down as a general rule that fewer mere chance results come with oil: the happy accidents which give such charm to water colour form also its weakness, when an accurate record is desired of tone or colour, or atmosphere effect. It may therefore be more useful as well as interesting if I deal mainly with ways and means of the less frequently used medium.

For all-round convenience nothing compares with the ordinary French box, fitted for palette, panel, colours, and brushes.

One can sit solid and work in any weather between the showers of an April or the snow-squalls of a December day. You just shut the box down, snuggle under the umbrella, "wait till the clouds roll by," and then to work again till the next. Another

frequent question is what is the most useful size for sketching. That is mainly, of course, for each one's own decision, but I find 9 by 6 inch small enough and 14 by 10 inch large enough for general purposes. Between these sizes one can make a fairly completed sketch in one sitting, and thus probably secure that unity and decision of effect, so all-important.

Beyond these limits the work is liable to get out of hand from the mere mechanical difficulty of covering the larger surface.

In rapidity and ease oil is no whit behind its rival. I have reproduced here some of my own sketches, with the times they occupied. "The Harrow Mill" took about an hour, and is so finished, though a rather difficult effect of sunlight, that an enlarged replica required but little more elaboration for its place on the line of the R.A.

"Bray Church" took twenty minutes, "Bray Village" less than a quarter-of-an-hour, "Hurley Lock" about an hour, "A Fen Village" the same. The reproductions do not give, of course, the varied colour which in every instance was my main motive and labour, rather than detail of drawing.

These are all painted on plain wood panels, which possess some notable advantages.



A FEN VILLAGE.

Their colour and surface blend most suggestively with any scheme, sunny or grey, so



BRAY VILLAGE.

that it is not necessary to carefully go over every interstice left by the brush at the risk of spoiling some happy bit of work. They are also partially absorbent, the colour sets at once, and trees, etc., can be painted on to the sky without the pigments running into an unmanageable oily slop.

With regard to mediums, the less the better, but to those who like them I would recommend the Macgils, in preference to the varnishes.

Careful preliminary drawing is not so necessary as in water-colour. Just indicate the horizontal line, and the masses in their proportions. Do not place the horizon so low as to cramp the foreground, nor in *fin-de-siècle* fashion so high that the subject seems to be toppling forward on to the spectator.

Here also I will give the golden rule: the larger the brush the better the work. Three-fourths of the painting should be

done with good-sized flat hog and some smaller ox-hair brushes: the size of the brush is relative somewhat to the size of the sketch.

My editor threatens, so I shall conclude with a little "promiscuous advice."

Amongst the very primary factors towards success are "comfort and peace," comfort of body, peace of mind. Don't perch on stools affording support to three legs only of a four-legged stool, nor try to cling to undue activities, and, by the way, an obvious Nemesis awaits the habit of putting down a loaded palette where it can be rubbed against or sat upon. Now as for peace of mind. All that horned terror, generically but inaccurately described in feminine speech as "horrid cows," is rather prone to suddenly appearing well in the foreground of some pet study, and the ensuing rout of the average lady artist is as thorough as it is uncalled for, though certainly a cow view from the low vantage of a sketching stool does loom rather mammoth-like above one. They have also a reprehensible habit of grouping themselves round any stile one has to cross, in stolid indifference to the wildest



BISHAM.

gesticulations and threats. On the other hand, the law of trespass and the anger of



HARROW MILL.

irate owners do not greatly worry our sisters in art, and yet frogs have been known to completely spoil a drawing, which a surly farmer with a gun and a bull-dog had not affected to the wavering of a line. Such the sex.

Take no notice of troublesome children, and in a little while they will find your company slow and go away; but sometimes it does happen, though not often, that the juvenile population of some neighbouring hamlet make your advent the occasion of a "day out." They bring their babies freely, and depose them with all responsibilities round about you. Then as starting or winning post in their racing contests you are found most convenient, or as "home" on the exciting game of "relievo" or relieve oh"! Your stationary form, short or tall, suggests various maypole dances, it also appears to induce a temporary deafness, and they shout and yell as if miles divided them; and, in fact, have such a generally good time that you marvel at the moderation of the bald prophet of old who was satisfied with only two bears to devour just a paltry forty of his tormentors. There runs, indeed, a

legend as to the revenge taken by one victim in the guise of a gift of a tube of Prussian blue, warranted to automatically besmear a county, when they say there arose presently on the evening air such a sound of wailing as though another Herod were abroad; but this is somewhat mythical. At this point, I think, having duly delivered myself as to some of the difficulties, some of the methods, and some of the humours of this most delightful of occupations, I will relapse once more into the accustomed silence of my brush and palette.

BENET HAMILTON.

BY CHRISTIAN BURKE.

I.

"You call it a great failure—ne'er the less,
It is the shadow of a great success."

THE red glow of a November sunset lay in fiery reflections upon the grey surface of the drowsy river. The gay boats and mimic steamers that all the spring and summer make these quiet reaches of the Thames a highway of pleasure, had long since brought their merry crews to one or another landing stage, and the hush of winter was already brooding upon the surface of the tranquil waters.

Long shafts of light struck through the interlacing boughs of the high wooded banks on the further side of the river, and fell in curious intricate patterns across the narrow, deserted paths. All was very quiet, yet there is seldom absolute stillness in a wood; the chance visitors might indeed have vanished, but the rightful inhabitant had still many things to do before the long sleep of winter.

Here and there the stately trees shook down a red and golden rain on the brown, flowerless earth—it is only in the smoky, murky air of our great cities that the foliage drops off at the first faint breath of the frost. Now and then a dead branch fell with a

helpless splash into the quiet waters, or an energetic robin in all the bravery of his autumnal vest sang a cheerful song for the edification of himself and his friends. From time to time a rabbit scudded through the dry carpeting of leaves towards some haven of refuge, or a mischievous squirrel swinging among the elastic branches of the fir trees, tossed some unfancied chestnut sheer down upon the patient head of an industrious dormouse, busily planning out his winter palace and store-house among the gnarled roots of a neighbouring oak. There are very few months of the year when Nature is not hard at work above ground, to say nothing of the marvels for ever being wrought in the heart of the fruitful earth, but at this particular season she goes on her way very quietly, and we need to have something of the acuteness of a "Fairy Fine-ear" if we would catch the sound of her passing feet.

To the casual observer the scene described would have been one of extreme loneliness, as if the animating spirit had withdrawn itself with the motley crowds that had so recently thronged the river, while the deserted forest was sinking silently into the lethargic sleep of Death, from which it seemed as if even the magic hand of Spring would fail to awaken it. Amid such surroundings the sound of hurrying footsteps crashing among the loose underwood, the ring of eager voices, and a merry girlish laugh fell on the ear almost with the effect of a false chord in the low-toned harmony. Indeed, to one, at least, of the pair now emerging from the deeper recesses of the wood and coming rapidly along the rugged foot-path, there was a vague consciousness of some jarring note between his own eager, vigorous life, and this fading, dying world around him, which filled his mind with a sense of sadness, almost of foreboding.

As the two figures came out on to the bank which sloped down to the meadows skirting the river, they paused for a few moments and stood together watching the sunset. An inquisitive field-mouse peered curiously out at them, and then retired pre-

cipitately, while the squirrel in a huff at this invasion of his privacy, swung cautiously over their heads, and dropped his remaining ammunition in a rattling volley on Valentine Orme's straw hat, and then retreated with nimble feet to his fir tree.

As they lingered in the hazy light, the girl's eyes were fixed with an irresistible fascination on the narrowing disc of the great ball of fire dropping rapidly behind the distant woods that bounded the far horizon, while her companion, with a yet more irresistible impulse, kept his gaze steadily turned towards the bright, animated face beside him. And there was reason enough for his absorption, for it was one of those speaking countenances that are often far more attractive than positive beauty.

Who would care that Benet Hamilton's features were irregular, the forehead a shade too high, the chin too squarely cut, while the whole was lighted by those wonderful eyes which seemed to defy all attempts to classify either their colour or expression, so bewildering were their variations with every changing mood and shifting light. The chill wind had brought an unusual colour to her cheek, she had pushed the dainty little fur cap she wore well away from the bright wavy masses of hair, and all about her there seemed an atmosphere of radiant yet subdued excitement, which was reflected back from her companion's face, although it was evident that to him the feeling was of a less pleasurable kind. The man beside her was in no way her equal on the score of good looks, being merely a hardy, well-knit young Englishman, although the frank, earnest face, and the clear hazel eyes, with a certain quiet humour in their tranquil depths, inspired both liking and absolute trust and confidence. His expression was somewhat cloudy and troubled just now, as he drew the girl's arm through his own, and led her down the bank and across the fields to the water's edge, where a little boat half concealed among the rushes, and manned by a small rough terrier, was waiting for them.

"It is getting too cold for you, Benet," the young man said, as he helped her carefully into the skiff, and wrapped a rug about her feet, while she sat smiling at him from the bows. "We shall not have much more boating now, for the days are so short, and I must not keep you out, even though it is our first afternoon together," he added, regretfully.

He would not have cared to have told any one for how long a time the clock to him had been set for this particular hour, and now that it had come, like so many another prayed-for moment, it had not brought him the joy he had expected.

"It doesn't seem possible that I can have been nine months away," the girl said, dreamily, as she dipped her disengaged hand into the chill, grey water. "It all seems so unreal, the being back here again. Well, it has been a lovely time," she went on with a smile and a sigh, "except, of course, the not having you." The words were spoken naturally, but they came as a sort of after-thought, and their hearer twisted impatiently enough in his seat to provoke a remonstrance from his companion, and a short, wondering bark from the four-footed guardian of the frail little craft.

The girl began again, as if picking up the broken thread of some former conversation. Once more she was eagerly pouring out the history of this London visit of hers, and her lover—for such he was—listened with a queer tightening at his heart to the marvellous encroachments of the one rival he had cause to fear, to the widening circle of experience and knowledge which had changed the tender-hearted, if wayward, girl, who had given him her troth barely a year ago, into the brilliant, courted, eager woman, fired with a new ambition, and with all her thoughts tending towards one great, and as it seemed to her, all-sufficing hope.

Yet this was not a record of idle pleasures; rather of days of hard work and patient study, of hours spent in famous galleries, of visits to world-renowned studios, of artistic praise, and flattering admiration from less gifted

friends, that had first suggested to the girl that her undoubted talent for painting was that mysterious power that must develop at last into genius. This was no flesh and blood rival that a man might measure his strength against. It was that mysterious, impalpable, shadowy "Art," of which she had, indeed, talked to him since the days that they were boy and girl together, and which he had treated always so lightly and so easily. Now it loomed out like some gigantic phantom before him, visionary, and yet all-powerful, like the grey mists sweeping over the meadow, so vague and so intangible, and yet capable of blotting out the fairest landscape.

That Benet herself was still unconscious of the change that was upon her was amply proved by the fact that it was to him that she was thus pouring out her heart, and yet—and yet! They had but met once during the whole of this long twelve months, and now that they were together again her talk was of all these things: not of the old riverside Parsonage, where a grey-haired old man had awaited her so patiently, not of that other home where Love was gathering together for her all its most precious gifts, but of these far-off, outside people and things that must inevitably, in the natural course of events, soon cease to be a part of her life! A country Vicar's daughter, soon to be the wife of an obscure country Solicitor, what rôle could she hope to play in that new realm from which she had come back with such reluctant feet? The glamour of the world was upon Benet Hamilton at this time; not less the world, that its jargon was of grand ideals, of lofty renunciations, of the duty of living up to one's highest intellectual capacities at any cost. Her eyes—innocent eyes that might yet grow cold and hard—were fast holden, and all the old familiar landmarks of right and wrong were dimmed and blurred.

An account of a grand garden-party, and a half-given promise to accompany a certain great lady to Rome in the Spring, to study under a famous master, was the sort of last straw to Orme's patience. He began to row

in a kind of silent fury, and the girl stopped short and sat watching in amused irritation the quick flash of the oars in the falling light, as the little boat shot with a swinging speed over the darkening stream. The woods and the meadows faded from them, and the twinkling lights of the town shone out cheerily through the gloom. Now they had passed under the old bridge where the river widens, and now they had reached the tiny red-tiled church, hidden away among the trees. As they came to the rude worn steps at the end of the Vicarage garden, Valentine leapt ashore, and held out both his hands to help the girl as she sprang lightly to his side. The blazing firelight showed ruddy and warm through the latticed windows of the house, and as the bells of the old tower in the little hamlet below chimed out, their sharp staccato notes mellowed by the distance, Benet's mood seemed to suddenly change. She drew closer to the young man, looking up at him with those unfathomable eyes, as she said, softly:

"It has been a lovely afternoon, Val, dear. After all, it *is* nice to be at home!"

There was no one to see, not even the squirrel, as he stooped down and kissed her, and then they went in to the bright firelit room, and Orme flung his misgivings to the winds for at least this one night.

II.

It was the "little cloud" no bigger than a man's hand, which was the precursor of that sound of an abundance of rain that fell like music on the watching ear of the great Prophet of Israel; so even in the every-day life of men there is usually some faint note of warning, some sign on the spiritual horizon, that ushers in each grave and important change. To Valentine Orme it seemed that this first chord had been struck in the unreasonable disquietude which had oppressed him on the day of Benet's return home. And yet when the full truth dawned upon him

that the girl was weary of her engagement, although as yet she had not summoned courage to try to be set free—the knowledge was as bitter and overwhelming as if no hint of it had crossed his mind. For as long as he might, he resolutely shut his eyes to the subtle change in her attitude towards him, and could not, because he would not, believe that much was seriously amiss between them. That her head was full of dreams and fancies in which he played no part, that there was a growing impatience of all their old happy life, a hurried putting aside of every subject that trenchanted upon the immediate future, were facts that took him long to learn. He loved her very dearly, he could not imagine for himself any path in life that diverged from hers, and he strenuously tried to lull his anxieties to rest with the thought that it must all come right when they were married.

It takes a rough awakening to rouse us sometimes, and Orme felt that his was indeed a sharp and sudden one when Benet quietly announced to him that pleasant spring afternoon as they sat together in her little studio, that she had made all her arrangements to carry out her darling plan, and was going abroad with her friend and "patron," as she loved to call her, after Easter.

For a moment the young man was absolutely thunderstruck, and then he got up and left the startled girl without a word. Unconsciously, no doubt, she had counted much on Valentine's sunny nature, which it took a good deal to upset, and on his entire devotion to herself, which had taught her to think that he would be satisfied with the mere crumbs of her affection, and would be willing to wait her wish and pleasure in all things. Now for the first time it occurred to her that there might be limits even to his seemingly boundless patience. Reproaches and entreaties she had expected, and, girl-like, would have probably rather enjoyed, but this silent leave-taking baffled her. That matters could not rest thus she knew, of course, and it was with some little trepida-

tion that that same evening she went down into the drawing-room and found her lover waiting for her in the flickering firelight, for the days were yet short and chilly although the wood by the river was already carpeted with primroses. She was opening the piano as usual when he said abruptly:—

“No, Benet, don’t play just yet. I want to talk to you.”

The girl came obediently and sat down in a low chair facing him, though there was a little smile of defiance on her lips, and an eager light in her eyes which boded ill for any hope of concessions on her part. By-and-bye they would be married, she supposed, but the next few years she was firmly resolved she would have to herself, to carry out her one great and, as it seemed to her, most glorious ambition; he would grow reconciled as the knowledge of her success dawned upon him.

Valentine, for his part, had fought out his battle and come to a decision that afternoon, as he tramped through the muddy country lanes, hardly knowing where he went so engrossed was he in the conflict with himself and his keenest desires. He was tired out now with the struggle, and he began quietly enough as he asked the girl whether she was really in earnest about this foreign tour of hers.

“In earnest? Of course I am! Why Val, you know that no one can really and truly be an artist until they have studied the masterpieces of the world.”

“Then I think you are wrong,” he said decisively; “you have other, nearer duties. Benet, dear, I don’t want to speak harshly, but your father is old, he is not strong, if there were no one else I don’t think you ought to go very far away from him.”

Just and true as the statement was, it was a false step if Valentine had had any hopes of influencing the wilful girl. It touched her in too vulnerable a part, for she loved her father dearly, though with the arrogance of youth it seemed to her that he must be always there to be loved and tended—at

a more convenient season. She flushed angrily and hardened her heart as she answered, while the indignant tears flashed into her eyes:—

“Father wishes me to go: he knows the vast importance of it: you don’t. Aunt Catherine is coming to stay with him, and he is quite willing to spare me, for he is much more unselfish than you are!”

“Still, I think you are wrong,” the other went on with steady persistence; “you know how much he will miss you, and if he is ready to forego his rights I am not; Benet, you owe some duty to me.”

“To you!” and there was a ring of intense amazement in the defiant laugh. “Not now, Val, we are not married yet; perhaps we never shall be,” she added recklessly.

“That’s just it,” he went on hurriedly; “it seems to resolve itself into this: we have been engaged to each other for some time, we have known each other all our lives, and I, at least, had hoped that we should be married this autumn. I would have made you so happy” (his voice broke a little in spite of himself), “but I see clearly now it must all come to an end. You were too young and inexperienced to know your mind. You have seen more of the world now, seen what you think is more to you than I could ever be. Benet, I cannot do with the fragments of your affection, I want your undivided love. I cannot, for I will not, stand second to your pictures and your career. It is a wife and a home that a man wants, not the name of these things.”

He broke off abruptly, while the girl sat gazing at him in sheer amazement, in which was mingled an unwilling admiration. It had come, the freedom that she had sighed for, and yet she had never been so near loving the man before her as now.

“The long and short of it is,” he went on quickly, “that I set you free. I do not blame you, even in my own heart, for you made that promise not knowing yourself. God grant you may find greater happiness in the path you have chosen. At least I can

save you from the direful mistake of shipwrecking your whole life by trying to make two impossible things combine, and from marrying a man you do not care for, for you do not care for me except as a friend: I have seen it this long time. I cannot unlove you, Benet, you are part of my very life, but I can and do relinquish all claim I may have ever had upon you."

There was a heavy silence in the room, where the fir cones were crackling merrily in the grate, and for many a day the scent of the pine brought back to Orme the bitterest hour of his life, with an almost intolerable sting of pain. Calm as he was there was no mistaking the suffering in his face, and his companion did not wrong him by doubting the cost at which he had spoken. Suddenly she raised her eyes, misty with tears, to his, and said softly, as she dropped her engagement ring into his hand:

"Val, I'm so sorry, but you are right. I do not care for you as you deserved to be loved, as I care for this new hope of mine. I cannot go against my fate, some time you will find a woman to give you all you deserve, for myself, I often think these things are not for me; I shall have my Art, and that is complete satisfaction."

He smiled very sadly, and then he said slowly,

"Benet, will you bear with me a little longer? I am not going to plead for myself, but for you. Somehow I cannot believe that this new way of yours will bring you even peace, and still less happiness, for to tread it you are turning from a very plain path of duty. You cannot disguise the fact that it is self-chosen; you are not called upon to work for your own bread, or that of others, as so many women are, you are breaking off your closest family tie, to follow it, and throwing away many things that you once thought precious. And beyond and above these considerations, which you seem to have been able to set aside, there is another that may perhaps weigh with you. Talented as you undoubtedly are, are you quite sure that

you possess that over-mastering genius which alone, if anything could, would justify the step you are taking?"

"But genius, talent even, is given us to use, and not to let it rust," she answered evasively.

"You might use it, Heaven forbid that I should even wish you to stifle your gift: but you might work quietly, for your own pleasure and the good and pleasure of the world, without sacrificing everything to it; without flinging your whole heart into what I tremble to think may be but an overwhelming disappointment. It is quite possible to cherish great ambitions without having within oneself the power to fulfil them."

"Of course I know you will never believe in me: one's own people never can, at least they never do," retorted the girl passionately, "there are others, however, who think differently."

"And those others have much to answer for," he said bitterly, and then as if unable to bear further discussion, he sprang to his feet.

"Well, there it must rest. I will not pain you with any more arguments, Benet. I set you free to try your own way. You may find it all that you think it, or you may meet with someone to whom you can give all you cannot give to me: but until that happens I shall not quite lose hope."

"I shall never marry, and I shall never change my aims," she answered proudly.

Then he spoke roughly with an anger born of intense pain, "Benet, is it *nothing* to you to say good-bye?"

He took her hands in his and stood looking anxiously into the vivid, flushing face that was so dear to him, then he put her from him and without saying another word he turned and left her. And the girl remained standing in the centre of the room until the dull sound of the closing of the outer door struck upon her ear, then she went wearily upstairs, wondering how it was that now, when she had gained all that she had striven for, there should be such an odd gnawing pain at her heart.

III.

It is curious how at times the eye will receive, and memory at a later moment will reproduce with unswerving fidelity, scenes and impressions which at the actual instant of their occurrence do not appear to have passed into the consciousness of the observer.

Benet would have said that upon that late Autumn day when she and Orme walked among the fading glories of the wood, her mind had been too deeply absorbed by other things to have noted any detail of her surroundings. And yet at the lapse of four years she found herself so haunted with a mental picture of what she had then been really looking at, that she was compelled, almost against her will, to try and fix it on her canvas to get rid of its too suggestive presence. She had been working hard for several days, and now in the dreary light of a laggard day she stood looking sadly upon the result of her labours.

Outside, the monotonous drip of the rain falling on the wet flags mingled with the sound of passing feet, as the busy work-a-day London world hurried on its ceaseless round of toil and pleasure.

But she was far enough away, it seemed to her, from all her now most familiar environment. Keen sharp airs that drifted across the sodden meadows were blowing all about her, she could smell the indescribable fragrance of the dry leaves crushing beneath her feet. Red lights lay gleaming on the cold, grey breast of the river, and shy creatures peered curiously at her from the bracken and underwood. Surely there was a robin singing somewhere, and a squirrel swinging, swinging among the waving branches. . . . Then she knew that her hand had not failed in its cunning; it was all there before her on that foot or two of canvas. Suddenly, all unbidden, there appeared before her eyes a man's face, there was a touch of a hand upon her arm, and a voice in her ears that she had not heard for many a day. These things were not in the

picture, but the artist dropped her brush with a choking sigh, and turning away sat wearily down in front of the dull smouldering fire, gazing at the fast dying embers without even heart or energy to stir them into a blaze.

It seemed to her that she had lived a lifetime since the day which memory had so vividly brought once more to life. Well, she had followed her own will, and trodden the path she had marked out for herself, and now she confessed that she had found, as so many of us do, not a crown of joy, but heavy sorrow and disappointment.

The old Vicar had died very suddenly while his daughter was still at Rome, and the girl had never recovered from the shock and the agony of remorse that had fallen upon her when she reached England, after travelling day and night, to find that she was just too late. If she had only remained at home, put her plans aside for a little longer, if she could have known—but alas! we cannot know: in such an hour as we think not of the Master comes, and we are not there to answer Him. The last link of home broken, she found herself entirely independent, and with adequate means to carry out all her schemes and plans, but it left her also quite alone in the world, and often in the long nights that followed she would wake up sobbing for the old tender love which had seemed so natural a blessing as to be hardly realised or valued, when she could have sunned herself in its full glow. As strength and energy returned she flung herself with feverish zeal into her work, but here again the shadows of disappointment fell thickly across her path. She disappointed—not so much the world—that might have been bearable—but herself. She toiled and her ideas slipped away from her; that which she wrought seemed but the ghost, almost at times the caricature, of the perfection which she imagined. Her days spent in famous galleries served but to open her eyes to her own limited capacities to a very humbling extent, her largest and most ambitious efforts were rejected on all sides, and came back

upon her hands with relentless persistency. She had talent, a certain delicate fancy, an eye for colour, the critics said, but she chose subjects that were beyond the skill of any woman artist that would have taxed the powers of the greatest dramatic painter, and the results achieved were only what might be expected.

"My child," said one of these great masters, looking at her with an anxious pity which at the time only angered her, "you paint well, but do not give up everything for it. Leave that to those who have genius -- and even they must often tread a way of sorrows."

Then she got overworked and her imagination failed her, and she grew at times to hate the very sight of her pictures, to weary almost to loathing of the mental stress and strain which they involved. Then came the days when she could do nothing; days when the voice of a child in the street, the merry laugh of a boy or girl, would fill her with wild, impotent longings to throw it all aside. To go out among her kind and be unlearned, unknown and light of heart as they; but it could not be, she had flung away her happiness with her own hands, and there was nothing else with which to fill the empty place.

She had fought it all out with herself at last, and since then, since she had sounded with line and plummet the shallows which she had fancied an immeasurable sea, a certain portion of peace had come to her. She began to succeed in a quiet way; as a figure painter she could never hold her own, but the patient studies of moorland and river, of wood and meadow which bore the signature of 'Benet Hamilton' had a real artistic value, and found welcome and appreciation among those who had lamented over her more ambitious efforts. Those had been only so much time and labour wasted, these had an enduring worth, a lasting power of giving pleasure to tired eyes and hearts, because with faithfulness and simplicity they brought men face to face with Nature.

And all this time, through these four troubled years, Orme had never crossed her path. Was he married perhaps? she sometimes wondered, and tried to believe that she hoped he was that he was happy and had long ago forgotten the girl who had used him so ill. But she could not put the thought of him out of her heart, she had loved him more than she knew when they parted, and now with clear yet hopeless vision she saw that she had thrown aside that which she would have given worlds to re-possess. She had driven Love away in her hour of triumphant hardness, but he had returned and filled, not with joy but sorrow, every corner of her heart.

The rain dashed ceaselessly in driving sheets against the window, the fire spurted and flickered, and the girl sat still with her hands lying idle in her lap, and could not see the feeble wavering flame for her blinding tears. She had learnt to live more in the lives of others, and to bear her troubles bravely as a rule, but to-night she had turned coward. She could do nothing, think of nothing save of that kind friendly face, that sheltering affection that had once been hers.

"If only he knew I wanted him," she sobbed to herself, as she closed her eyes to keep back the salt drops that burnt their way through in spite of her. The opening of a door startled her, she sat up hurriedly and turned half round towards it. Was she awake, or was she dreaming that the man standing in the doorway with the rain shining upon his coat, and the old, eager, anxious look upon his face, was Valentine Orme? Graver, somewhat sadder than of yore, but with the same earnest kindly light shining in his hazel eyes.

It is well in some crises to have no time for thought, no time for pride to crush out with iron hand the first true impulse, and to give the tangled threads of life a yet more bewildering twist. Had Benet stopped to think, there is no saying what new complications would have arisen; as it was she sprang from her chair, Orme held out his

empty arms, and she fled like a tired child into that safe refuge.

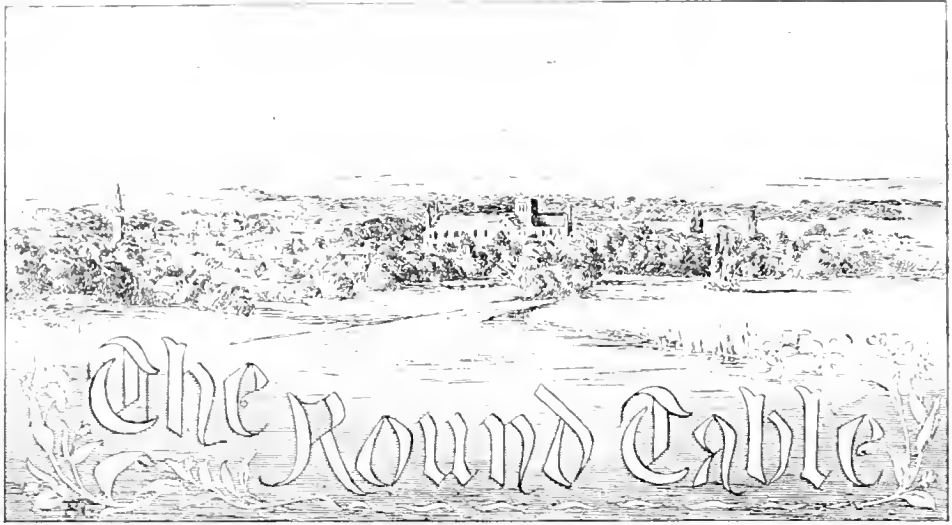
Though he had kept steadily out of sight it had not been hard for the man to follow the chequered career of the girl from whom he had borne so much. He had watched with an aching heart both her failures and her slowly growing success. He had been very patient, and at times absolutely hopeless, he had meant to wait even yet a little longer, but with the Spring days there had come upon him an intolerable hunger for just a sight of her face. At the very worst he could not be further off from her than he was at present; and so he had come once more to dare his fate.

If she had been so dear to him in the hey-day of youthful arrogance, what could be the measure of his passionate affection for the tired woman who clung to him with such unshaken trust and whose first thought was to sob out all the story of her long mistake, with a noble humility of which the girl he had cared for of old had known nothing! The world

judges by another standard, yet it was surely by that simple confession, and by all that it involved, that Benet Hamilton became great in the eyes of the man who loved her; and not only before him, but before that higher Court where a yet more wonderful Love gives judgment.

The orchards were pink and white with bloom, and the broad surface of the Thames shone like a sheet of gold, when the joy bells from the old tower rang out their long-delayed welcome to Valentine Orme and his wife. The squirrel who had waked like a miniature giant from his winter sleep, considered they were making a great fuss about nothing; perhaps if he ever discovers that his portrait, and the picture of his home hangs in Valentine's study as his most precious possession, he may see fit to alter his opinion. At present he treats the pair, when they wander together through his special domains, with a gentle, frisky, ridicule, for even a nineteenth century squirrel cannot be expected to understand everything!





IN the Town Hall at Winchester there hangs above the Judge's seat a circular wooden disc, commonly called "King Arthur's Round Table."

Why the table hangs there and when it was so placed are questions that no man can answer for the beginning of its history has long been lost. In the last century its origin was referred back to the veritable days of King Arthur, and it was credited with an existence of twelve hundred years. Since that it has been suggested that it is almost modern, or merely a replica of one that formerly hung there, and now again, that it can be traced for six hundred years.

The Winchester Town Hall, built like all the older parts of the ancient city, of the flint stones that lie in strata in the chalky soil of the neighbourhood, is the only remaining portion of the castle that formerly stood on the high ground near the Eastern gate. The gateway and some small portions of the walls still exist closely crowded upon by the barracks and railway of to-day.

The castle is referred rather to the Norman than the Roman period of our history. The hall, unlike many of our secular relics, is still used for its original purposes, the administra-

tion of justice, and occasional festivity. The table, which is so striking and curious a decoration, is eighteen feet in diameter. In the centre is a Tudor rose surrounded by a white border on which is inscribed:—

"This is the Round Table of Kyng Arthur w. XXIII. of hys renowned Knyettes."

Round the edge of the table runs another white band with the names on it of twenty-four knights; the rest of the surface is painted in alternate segments of green and white. The circumference has been divided into twenty-six equal parts. At the top, covering two of them and reaching down to the central rose, is a royal figure. It is known that the painting has been from time to time renewed, but there is reason to believe that the same style has been preserved for, at any rate, three or four hundred years.

It is quite certain that for several centuries a table has hung in that place, the question is whether this is really the relic or whether it merely replaces it. There are records touching it in the reigns of Henry III., the VI., the VIII., and Mary, but in the latter time of the Stuarts Ashmole, in his "History of the Order of the Garter" says that he remembers to have seen it in his youth, but

that it had at the time of his writing, been broken up by the Parliament's soldiers "being before half ruined with age."

This certainly appears quite conclusive, yet in 1780, Dr. Milner, in his "History of Winchester," described it as being perforated with many bullets supposed to have been shot by Cromwell's soldiers. Between these two accounts it is plain that the authenticity of the relic rests on the bullet holes. Some years ago, when it was temporarily removed from the wall during some repairs such holes were found in it, and one bullet was extracted; it was also discovered that at the back of it were mortices for twelve legs and a central support, evidence of its having been actually used as a table. It may fairly be concluded, therefore, that in Ashmole's time it was restored, and not renewed.

To take the historical allusions to it seriatim. In the reign of Henry III., an order was given to the builder, or re-builder of the hall, to construct a Wheel of Fortune. This Wheel of Fortune is supposed by many to be identical with the Round Table, though it is not clearly traceable. The first really definite allusion is by the rhyming chronicler Hardyng, who lived in the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV., who says that the table of Arthur is "hanging yet" at Winchester, but here, again, the sceptic steps in with a suggestion that this particular passage is an interpolation. Then Deland, the librarian of Henry VIII., refers to it in his "Assertio Arthuri." In 1522 it was shown to the Emperor Charles V. It had at that time been recently re-painted, for Paulus Jovius, who records the event, says that the marginal names had been restored with so little respect to the venerable antiquity of the original work, as almost to impair its character of genuineness. It was probably modernised, as the style of decoration belongs to this date. If the earlier notices are rather indefinite, the fact remains that at this time it had existed long enough to be an old defaced relic.

A little later the table is fully described by

Diego de Vera, a Spanish writer, who was present at the marriage of Philip and Mary. I translate from a passage from "*Leroux de Liney*," quoted by Smirke.

"At the time of the marriage of Philip II. with Queen Mary, they still showed at Hunscrie the Round Table made by Merlin. It is composed of twenty-five compartments coloured in white and in green, which end in a point in the middle and go increasing to the circumference, and in each division were written the name of the knight and that of the king. One of these compartments, called the place of Judas or seat perilous, remained always empty."

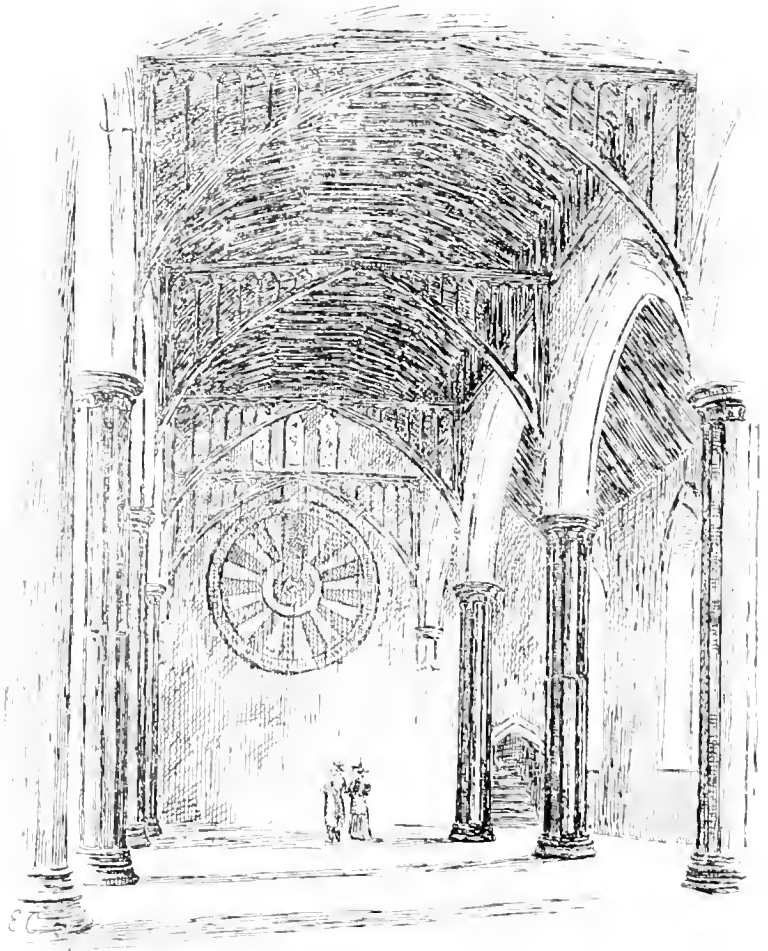
Mr. Smirke continues: "Notwithstanding the singularity of the word Hunscrie as representing either Winchester or Hampshire, there is no doubt as to the city in which the Royal marriage took place, and though the description of the table does not quite tally with its appearance now, it cannot reasonably be supposed to refer to anything else."

We now at a distance of at least three-quarters of a century, pass on to Ashmole, and something like a century after him to Dr. Milner. It is evident that between the times of Milner in 1780, and Smirke in 1846, the table had again been either partially or entirely re-painted, if their respective illustrations are to be trusted. The two Royal figures differ considerably: the lettering, allowing for some diversity in the copying, does not seem quite the same, and the word written, "renowned," in the later rendering, might in the earlier be quite as readily supposed to be "valiant." The numerals also, XXIII. in Smirke are XXII. in Milner, so that it seems probable that there was once a vacant space, as described by the Spaniard. If the table were a true relic of King Arthur, it should belong rather to Old Caerleon, slowly decaying on the banks of the Usk, than to Winchester, for it was there that Merlin established it, but this disc of painted wood is all too inadequate to fill the place of the splendid dream table of romance.

Potent in influence but elusive in form the Round Table pervades the romances from first to last. Now it is a veritable table with its magic inscriptions of the names of the knights and its seat perilous, where none but the chosen knight might sit, who should achieve the quest of the Holy Grail. Again it is some great hall where the knights assemble for feasting, council, or warlike exercises, and yet again, to dine at the Round Table is an honour that King Arthur can grant, while with his army on a distant expedition. Robert de Boron, one of the earliest of the Arthurian romance writers, gives the history of its formation in the time of Uther Pendragon, Arthur's father. Mystic and allegorical, it directly connects the characters of romance with the persons of sacred history.

After Merlin had accomplished the erection of Stonehenge, he came to Uther Pendragon and served him long, and much loved him." There came a time when he drew the king aside in council. He acknowledges his own origin as the son of the devil, but tells him of the additional knowledge that he has from God of the Future, by virtue of which the Devils have no power over him. He reminds him of the supper of our Lord, and that after his death a knight asked for his body, he continues, "This knight being afterwards in a

desert place with much of his lineage, there fell upon them a great hunger. And he prayed to our Lord to show mercy on them. And our Lord commanded him to make a table in the name of the table at which he was set in the house of Symond Leprouse and hadde hym take the vessel which he hadde, and sette it upon the table, and cover the table with white cloth, and also the vessell all save the part towards hym. Sir this vessell was brought to the saide Knight by our Lorde Jesu Christ whyle he was in prison XL winter hym for to comforte. And sir by this holy vessell were departed the



THE TOWN HALL.

company of gode and evell. And also at this table was a voyde place that betokeneth the place of Judas ther as he satte at the soper."

"And sir, the people that were thereat cleped this vessell that thei hadden in so great grace the Graal: and yef ye do my counseile ye shall stablisse the third table in the name of the trinite. And I behote you yet ye do this ther-by shall come to you grete honour and grete profit of your soule: and it shall be a thyng that moste shall be spoken of through the worlde." The King is well pleased and leaves everything to the ordering of Merlin. And Merlin says that the table shall be established at Cardsell (Caerleon), in Wales, and the king shall make there his feast at Pentecost. When Pentecost comes, Merlin chooses fifty knights to sit at the table to meat. He shows the king the void place, and tells him that it shall not be filled in his time, but it shall be in the king's time that shall come after him, and that he who shall accomplish that seat, must also accomplish the void place at the table that Joseph made.

In the subsequent history of Merlin, the table has passed into the possession of Leodogan, the King of Carmalide. It is given to Arthur as the marriage portion of his daughter Gonnore, with 150 or 250 knights, 50 more being afterwards added to make up the full complement of the Order, which was, according to most accounts, limited to either two or three hundred.

About the same time that the romances were written, Matthew Paris, the monk of St. Alban's, was keeping his diary of current events. History and romance dovetail. In his summary of the events of the hundred years that preceded him, he records from time to time the fulfilment of the prophesies of Merlin: then in the year of the Coronation of Richard I., he mentions the discovery of the bones of King Arthur at Glastonbury, and also that the body of Walwain (Gawain) had been found in Wales. When his history comes down to his own time, he notes year

by year where the king keeps Christmas, the words being almost the same as those used in the opening of some of the chapters in "Lancelot," where all appointments are made with reference to the Church Festivals. It is in this latter part of his history that he alludes to martial sports and exercises of a more serious nature than the tournament, which were called "Tabula Rotunda." These sports evidently fell into disuse during the hundred years after the death of Matthew Paris, for it was a notable event when, in 1344, Edward III. established at Windsor a Round Table. Concerning this "Round Table," the historians are not much more definite than the romancists, for some say that the king made, at Windsor, a circular building, 200 feet in diameter, for the display of the feats of arms; others, that he made a building in the Castle in which was placed a table of 200 feet diameter, where the knights should be entertained at his expense. The faith, however, that willingly accepts the mystic table of Merlin, quails before a realistic table of such monstrous dimensions that a cricket match might be played on its surface, and imagination refuses to picture a circle of reasonable beings seated round it for the purpose of dining. It seems far more probable that the Round Table was, as another writer tells us, the field for the martial sports, and that when the knights dined in the great rotunda, they did so with some regard to convenience, tables or boards being brought in, as was the custom of the time.

In comparing the romances with history, it must be remembered that though they are assigned to the thirteenth century, they were manuscript until the fifteenth, and that so long as they remained so they were subject to constant variations at the hands of the scribes, who all introduced their own additions or abbreviations. The following passage from "Lancelot du Lak" recalls the Chamber of Edward III., which, however, may not have been the first of its kind. It occurs towards the end of the book, the

Court being at Camelot. Arthur had discovered the treachery of his favourite knight, and war was declared between them. Before the actual commencement of hostilities, he decided, by the advice of Gawain, to fill up the places at the Round Table that were vacant through the death of knights, and their departure with Lancelot and the Queen: — "So they withdrew to a part at the end of the palace, and looked, in the first instance, how many there were missing at the Round Table, and they found there were wanting by right count seventy-two, and forthwith they elected as many, and seated them in the seats of those who were killed or who were with Lancelot, but without doubt there was none so bold that he dared seat himself in the Sovereign seat."

So they all seated themselves in their seats, and placed themselves that day at the Round Table. They were very nobly served as the custom was in the court of so high a king, at the table of King Artus there were seven kings who held lands of him."

There is certainly some confusion in this passage, as it appears that the knights had seats in some hall or arena, and it is also implied, both here and elsewhere, that where the king dined was called the Round Table. It was when Lancelot Gallebault and Hector had gone to assist Arthur in defending his territories in Scotland, that they were made Knights of the Order, "And that evening," says the author "They dined at the Round Table."

Whenever there is any description of dinner or supper the tables are several, and are taken away after the meal.

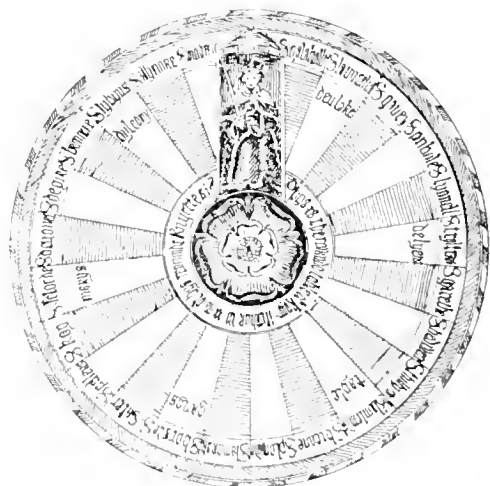
"Ha, Demoiselle," says Merlin to the impetuous young huntress, "Pray do not hurry the knights so severely, for no hurrying is of any use, for from henceforth there will obtain in this house a custom that whatever adventure occurs, if mortal peril may not come of it, no knight who is seated at the table will rise before he has eaten, but when the tables shall be taken away, then

the knight can follow his adventure, he to whom it shall be adjudged."

In the first mention that occurs in Lancelot, of a Court Festival, the customs of the table are fully detailed. The description has a close parallel in Froissart's account of the feast given by Edward III., after the taking of Calais.

"At the beginning of April, King Arthur was, on Easter Day, at Karaches, a very good city of his, and it was his custom to bear himself more richly on Easter Day than on any other day, and he only held high court to wear his crown five times in the year. It was at Easter, at Ascension, at Pentecost, at the feast of All Saints, and at Christmas."

"When Banin had thus vanquished all those of one side, and of the other at the combat, he was much noticed by many brave men (preudhommes), for at this time all deeds of valour were more prized than they had ever been previously, and it was the custom at all the courts where the king wore his crown, when he came to supper, he, who had done best of the strangers, served at the Round Table with the first course, and it was the beginning of his recognition and the sign of his valour, and when he had served he went and sat at the table of King Arthur, not



THE ROUND TABLE.

close to him, but moderately near, and no knight sat there except on one side, save only he who had vanquished the company, to be better known by all men.

When Banin had served with the first course at the Round Table, Messieurs Gawain and Keux, the seneschal, brought him before the king and made him sit down. The king looked at him very kindly, for marvellously he loved good knights. After the third course words began to flow, and the king spoke to the knight and he to the king, and on the days that he wore his crown there was not any man of his court seated at his table, on the contrary, each one had his table where he sat the more honourably to receive the brave men that he knew.

The king asks Banin his name, and whence he comes. Banin replies that he is from Benoic, and the godson of King Ban, recently dead. He is moved to tears, and the king also weeps and falls into a reverie. Gawain and Keux have a long conversation as to the propriety of rousing him. At last, Keux takes Gawain by the arm and tells him that he has thought of a way by which they could draw him from his gloomy thoughts. He then takes a horn that hangs on some stags antlers and sounds it so that all the hall re-echoes. The king starts, and Gawain then asks him, "Of what have you been thinking so much, sir? There is not a man who is not affronted with you. You ought to entertain every one who is come to your court, and you have fallen into so deep a reverie that every one is astonished. One would blame a child for doing this, and one holds you for one of the wisest men that live." I am aware that these quotations rather present than solve a difficulty, especially when another is added, in which the usurping Lady of Carmalide recalls in her letter to Arthur the events of his visit to the Court of Leodogan, and says, that on the day of Pentecost, he had carved the peacock at the Round Table to the admiration of the hundred-and-fifty knights who sat at the table, so that each one was served with it to his satisfaction. Here the table

suddenly reverts to its first state, as it was made by the semi-supernatural Merlin in the old poem of Robert de Boron, and is graced by a very adequate dish. It does not seem impossible that the Winchester Table may be the visible effigy of this mystic table, and be a true survival of the days of chivalry, when the legends of King Arthur were combined into the romances, and in many points of their setting brought up to date.

The amphitheatre of Caerleon called the Round Table, touches its signification as a place for sports or exercises. Though of Roman origin, it is closely associated with the records and traditions of the 6th century, with which the whole place is pervaded. There is, therefore, always the possibility that its connection with the real King Arthur may not be entirely mythical.

SOME LITERARY LADIES.

BY G. B. BURGIN.

OF course, strictly speaking, the personalities of distinguished writers should be nothing to us. We have no business to lift the veil. All that should concern us is the manner of their work and how it affects us. The literary critic tells you, "My dear Mr. Burgin, when a lady writes a story, you must dismiss her identity from your mind altogether, and simply consider the book as a work of art: which, by the way, it very often is not. But human nature is prone to curiosity. When we are interested in a book, we want to know what manner of man or woman wrote it, and why it was written. Very often, when we find out the identity of the author, it is a shock. The book was written simply to sell and to enable the author to live. Every now and then, some high-minded man or woman writes a book to illustrate a fad or a moral; but more frequently the writing of books is a calling, just like any other calling; and my friend Mr. Anthony Hope, for instance, goes down to his Chambers and

writes with as much regularity every day as if he were attending to briefs. Writing very often becomes a business; but there are inspired souls who write for the love of their high office—lofty beings whose mission it is to lift us to the stars. Sometimes they drop us before we get there; but, then, that is probably owing to one's own inherent defects.

There are so many different women-writers that it is a little difficult to know whom to single out. Mrs. Humphrey Ward, Miss Annie Swan, and Mrs. Flora Steel are frequently to be met with at the cosy rooms of "The Writers' Club," or at the Authors' Club teas, and I have seen one of these ladies at the Pioneer Club, which is more luxuriously and tastefully furnished than any other London institution of the kind. I think it was on that occasion my friend Barry Pain gave a lecture on "Have women any humour?" The debate which followed, mostly conducted by literary ladies, was one of the saddest answers in the negative to which I have ever listened. Many ladies told anecdotes in order to prove their sense of humour; and as each old familiar story of one's youth appeared on the scene, the room seemed to be peopled with the ghosts of ancient tales.

Now that the gifted Mrs. Oliphant has passed away, Miss Braddon may fairly be considered the *doyenne* of the literary ladies. She has a delightful home at Richmond, and spends a good deal of time there in the society of her two sons and numerous pets. She is particularly fond of horses and dogs, and nothing delights her more than to give pleasant little breakfast-parties either in town or at her own home. I remember at one of these breakfasts meeting the Bancrofts, Wyndhams, Lady Monkton, the Jeromes, and five or six other celebrities; in fact, I was the only undistinguished person at the table. In the course of a chat afterwards, Miss Braddon told me that she now writes only one book a year and that she works very regularly. There is a little bloated

cork pen-holder of which she is particularly fond. She invariably uses this when at work, and does not dictate her stories like so many other writers. When one remembers that Miss Braddon is rapidly nearing her seventieth book, it is difficult to realise that her outlook upon life is as bright and enthusiastic as if she had just begun to write. Look at seventy books upon a shelf and think, irrespective of the other qualities necessary to insure success, of the enormous amount of mere manual labour involved in the production of so prodigious a quantity.

It is a little dangerous to say anything about Miss Marie Corelli, because one never quite knows whether she will be angry or pleased with what is said. Unfortunately, she thinks that there is a conspiracy on the part of the critics to depreciate her work. With that, of course, I have nothing to do; but the fact remains that she has "sold" more than any other author in the last three years, and has undoubtedly influenced people of all classes. It seems to me, too, that she has given pleasure and occupation to a great many people. "But, my dear sir," says your fussy critic, "her books are not literature." I don't profess to know what "literature" is myself. (I generally spell it with a capital "L," and thereby consider that I have complied with the demands of social etiquette), but I do know what books people are in the habit of reading. The whole of the trouble between Miss Corelli and her critics seems to me to have arisen from a mutual misconception. Miss Corelli aims at interesting the general run of readers, some, perhaps, who read without any high intellectual effort; and the critics insist that she shall be severely intellectual; that she mustn't do this, that, and the other because it isn't Art, with a capital "A." Personally, I believe in doing the best work one can; but when you come to consider what people are like, it is not the intellectual reader who is in the majority. After all, the intellect does not play every part in life. We love and hate, and fear and admire, and we very often do so from mere

instinct. And so Miss Corelli, sitting in her dainty boudoir at Kensington, wages ferocious war on the critics. The critics say they don't mind; I daresay it amuses Miss Corelli, when she has time to think about it; and the general public when it wants Miss Corelli's books, simply goes to the bookstall and gets them.

Miss Corelli is a charming hostess and witty conversationalist. I have had the misfortune to differ from her on one or two points, but that only makes me endeavour to be scrupulously accurate in talking about her. She has a charming custom of presenting each of her guests with a "button-hole." When she is happy, she is very happy; but I should think that she is nervously susceptible to impressions, and that trifles would very often have a determining influence on the keynote for the day. If a writer were not susceptible to trifles, I do not see how he or she could possibly write. It is the trifles which influence existence.

To parody the witty Frenchman who did not know where to spend his evenings when he married, I do not know where to spend my Saturday afternoons now that Mrs. Lynn Linton has retired to Malvern. Her Saturday "At Homes" at Queen Anne's Mansions were always the brightest and most interesting literary function of the week. You met all kinds of distinguished people there. Mrs. Lynn Linton has been described as a "woman hater," but she has more feminine friends than any other woman in London. In real life she is the sweetest and most courteous of women. She wields a bitter pen sometimes; but what is the use of your saying a thing unless you say it forcibly? It was at her house that I first met Miss Beatrice Harraden, who wrote "Ships that Pass in the Night." She is a little woman, with great eyes, and a soft, melodious voice, and with a bright, vivacious interest in everything, which impressed me very much. She had just given away all her books. I think her idea was that she had no business to own books when other people had not any, and I

fancy that this heroic resolution subsequently caused her a pang of regret—a regret which only Spartan resolution could hide. Since her visit to California her health has greatly improved. Her Californian book, however, depressed me. It had none of the eagerness of outlook of "Ships that Pass in the Night." At the time I met Miss Harraden her health was so bad that very often she was physically unable to hold a pen. A typewriting machine would have destroyed her nerves entirely. Imagine, therefore, the huge obstacles to be surmounted by her indomitable will and cheerful courage.

"John Strange Winter" (Mrs. Arthur Stannard), on the other hand, has a robust physique and perfect health. She is one of the busiest women in the world, and a gifted Frenchman once came to me to say that he wanted to meet her particularly. "She is ze mothaire of ze British army," he said; "she have write ze Maltese baby." I found out that he meant "Bootles' Baby." It is a boast of Mr. and Mrs. Stannard that they have never missed a "first night" at the Lyceum. Indeed, they actually came over from Dieppe in order to be present at the last function of this kind.

It was Mrs. Stannard who first introduced me to that cheery, brave, patient old lady, now alas! passed away, Mrs. Linnaeus G. Banks, the author of "The Manchester Man," and thirty or forty other novels which had a great vogue in their day. I was calling on Mrs. Fenwick Miller one day, and helped a little, bent, somewhat decrepit old lady up the steps. When we entered the front door Mrs. Stannard introduced us, and the old lady drew me into a corner for a chat. "You must come and take tea with me," she said brightly; "but, first, I ought to tell you that I live in a place called Dalston. It isn't fashionable, you know; but perhaps a young man who will help a shabby old lady up a doorstep will not mind that. I met a literary gentleman here once" (she laid a somewhat sarcastic emphasis on the word "gentleman") "who was very anxious to come and see me;

but when I told him that I lived at Dalston he said he had 'nevah heard of the howwid place, and how did one get there?' I told him the only way for him to get there was to stop away, and he said 'weally!' But you, know," she continued, "very few people are like that. They are kind and helpful. Mrs. Stannard actually got me a grant when I was very, very poor. The greater a man or woman is, the more considerate and courteous I find him or her, as the case may be." After that, I went to Dalston—several times and heard all about the ancient glories of Manchester. On the occasion of my last visit, the dear old lady gave me a copy of her poems. "There," she said, in her curious little dry, piping voice, "don't you dare to laugh at me. You're young (I wasn't, but I seemed so in comparison with her great age) and can appreciate verse. I am old, but I have come back to it again. What a dear world it is! But I mustn't complain. People have always been very good to me." And then one day the curtain came down, and this brave, patient, old lady who toiled on up to the very last, left "the dear world" and the people who had been so good to her, and entered into her well-earned rest.

DANISH MEMORIES.

BY LADY JEPHSON.

CHAPTER V.

To visit Fredensborg we went by train to Hillerød, and drove thence by a road which skirts the beautiful Castle of Fredricksborg and the small Château of Badstue, through charming beech-woods and by corn-fields to Lake Esrom, on the shores of which stands Fredensborg.

A little village street leads up to the gates of the Château, which has a circular courtyard, is whitewashed like Bernstorff, and

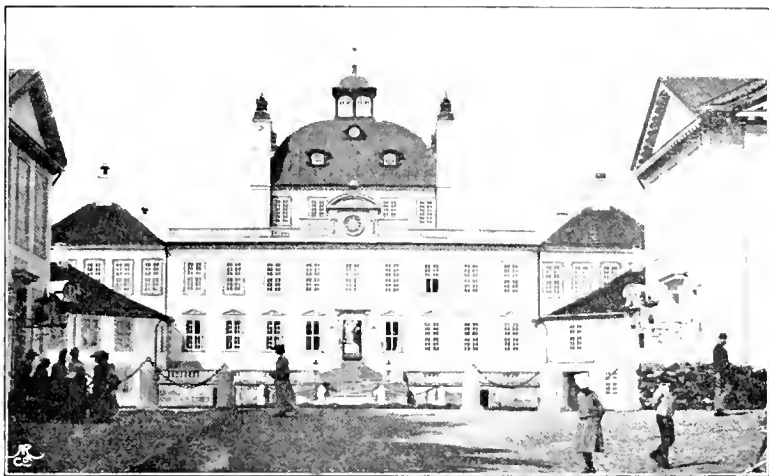
boasts nothing very remarkable inside except a fine plaster ceiling, some good paintings, and choice specimens of Rococo and Barocco furniture. After stately Fredricksborg, the architecture is a sad come down, but Fredensborg has a sentimental and historical interest which makes it as delightful in its way as the more beautiful Castle. Here year after year have taken place the happy family gatherings, of which we have all heard so much, and future history will tell how the great ones of the earth cast aside ceremony and state, and lived a simple happy family life together, a pattern for all to imitate. The gardens of Fredensborg are most beautiful, and the distant glimpses of the blue lake and foreground of trees, flower-beds, and statuary make an enchanting picture. In the Queen of Denmark's boudoir we saw a wall, panelled completely with small oil portraits of members of the Oldenburg Dynasty. In the drawing-room our guide pointed out a pane of glass bearing the signatures, "Alexander and Dagmar," and beneath, those of "Albert Edward and Alexandra." Some vulgarians had thought to immortalise themselves by scrawling their names above the Royal ones, but the Queen of Denmark soon put an end to their aspirations by ordering the upper part of the pane of glass to be removed and replaced by glass innocent of 'Arries' signatures. The Princess of Wales' bedroom and boudoir open into each other, and look out on the three avenues which branch off to the lake beyond. On the first floor are the rooms formerly assigned to the late Czar and his Czarina, and they also overlook the gardens and command charming views. The look-out from the windows of the King and Queen of Greece's suite is more prosaic, since the court-yard and avenue beyond are less interesting, and certainly, inferior in beauty to the garden view. The Château throughout is most home-like and comfortable, if slightly Philistine as judged by modern canons of taste; the wall-papers being a bright Royal-

blue in colour, and the carpets not strikingly artistic in tone. The hall is fine, and here the Royal Family usually dine, their respective suites having for their dining-room a smaller *salon*, wherein hang the portraits of the old farmer and his wife who originally lived at Fredensborg.

In historical memories Fredensborg is not wanting. Its name is commemorative of the treaty of peace signed here in 1720, *fred* meaning peace in the Danish language. The 4th Frederick and his Queen (Louise of Mecklenbourg) built the house as a retreat from the grandeur of Fredricksborg. Here Juliana (the second Queen of Frederick the Fifth, and Louisa of England's Successor) died, and here also the tradition declares that she concocted the infamous plot by which Carolina Matilda was ruined and Struensee lost his life.

We came out of the Palace unwillingly, into the glare of whitewash, and retraced our steps over the cobble stones of the courtyard. At the gates we found our carriage, and turning to the left, drove through pretty scenery and past charming cottages lying amid shrubberies and gardens, until we reached the station.

Here our troubles began, since a perverse Fate took us to Elsinore instead of to the bourn of our desires—Copenhagen—when we found ourselves *en route* for Helsingør tired out, weary of sight-seeing, and faint for want of food, we almost collapsed with despair. Worse still! we discovered at our first stoppage that no train returned to the capital for the next two hours, so accepting the situation with what philosophy we could, we went on to Elsinore, where at least we



FREDENSBORG SLOT.

were likely to find something to eat. After fortifying ourselves and recovering our tempers, we set out again to see the sights, and came to the conclusion that the straggling, red-roofed, old-fashioned town of Elsinore, with its glorious views over the sound, magnificent Castle and background of well-wooded country, was worth even the annoyance of missing one's train for. In former days Elsinore prospered exceedingly on account of its sound duties. Now-a-days it lies a sleepy, pretty little place enough, but anything but prosperous or flourishing. The Castle of Kronberg is a very beautiful building, Northern Renaissance in architecture, but of yellow sandstone instead of the usual red brick. It stands on a peninsular, is strongly fortified, and possesses a moat, ramparts, and double bastions. Frederick II. (Anne's father) was the builder thereof, and right regally he did it, paying for everything from his privy purse. Like Rosenborg and Fredricksborg, it is no longer lived in by the Royal Family, but instead of being like them, given up to the purposes of a Museum, it is turned into soldiers' quarters. Surely the most gorgeously beautiful barrack as regards external architecture in Christendom!

We entered by a drawbridge and passed under the richly-sculptured gateway into the

court-yard. Here on the right we were pointed out two ground-floor rooms where poor Carolina Matilda (sister of George III.) was imprisoned, through the intrigues of the wicked Juliana Maria of Brunswick, step-mother of Christian the Seventh. It will be remembered that this poor lady, the daughter of Frederick Prince of Wales, married her cousin Christian, 7th of Denmark. The half-mad King seems to have been under the dominion of Juliana, and no doubt Carolina Matilda being excessively young, charming, and handsome, lacked experience and prudence. Struensee, the Prime Minister, was a man of powerful intellect and attractive personality. He had unfortunately, roused the jealousy and dislike of the nobles and Queen Dowager, by his reforms of the law and administration. The Queen, admiring and liking him, took no pains to conceal her partisanship with Struensee, and thus the conspirators of 1772 induced the half-witted King to believe that the Queen had betrayed him, and that his life was in danger. Under pressure from the Queen Dowager and others, Christian signed an order for the arrest of his Queen, Struensee, and Brand. The men were tried and beheaded, but the ill-fated Queen was saved by what Wraxall calls "the argument of a strong fleet sent from England."

Four years later she died a blighted, heart, broken woman in semi-captivity at Zell.

Thinking of Carolina Matilda's sad story, we mounted a staircase to the turret where she sat straining her eyes sea-wards day after day, looking for help from England. The outer room with its black and white marble pavement, fine old chimney-piece and black marble pillars on either side of the door-way, was worth seeing. Below the turret lies the scene of the ghost's walk in Hamlet, and where as Horatio said:

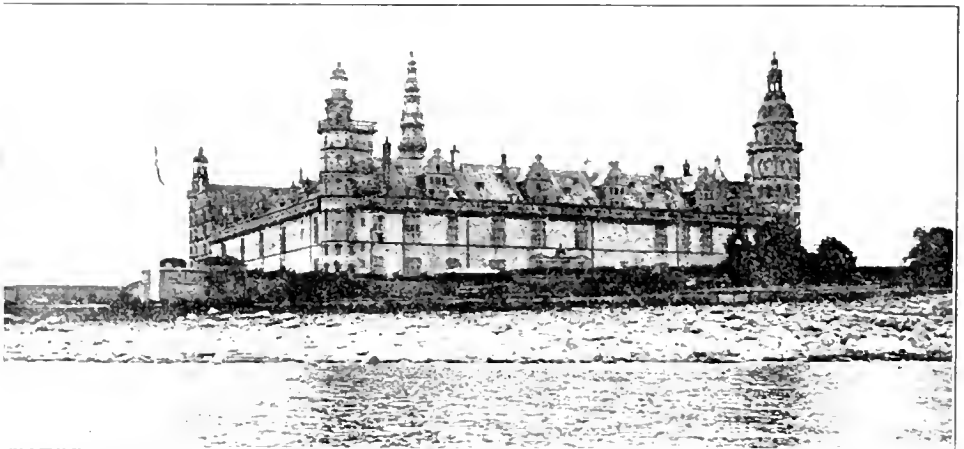
"It started like a guilty thing,
Upon a fearful summons."

On this terrace, too, Horatio is described as saying to Marcellus:

"But look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high Eastern hill."

Not far from Elsinore at Marienlyst, a little seaside place, a grave has been obligingly invented for the "Prince of Denmark," since, says Marryat, "Each fresh English sailor on his first arrival demanded to be conducted to the tomb of Hamlet."

We took the 6.30 steamer back to Copenhagen (which, by the way, is called in Danish Kjøbenhavn, and means Merchants' Harbour) and at 9.30 we arrived there. As long as it was light we lingered on deck admiring the charming scenery of the Danish Coast.



CASTLE OF KRONBERG.

Everywhere it is well-wooded and green: and picturesque fishing villages with their red roofs break the monotony of beech-wood forests. Here and there appear prosperous-looking farm-houses, all on the same model, and either forming three sides of a square or else the principal dwelling is detached, always white-washed, and generally to be found with steep roof and dormer windows, the buildings on either side of the court-yard being stables and coach-houses, barns and houses for the *employés*. A glorious sunset, the sight of the Sound dotted with vessels innumerable, the opposite Swedish coast, and the balmy evening air will remain delightful memories of this day's expedition with me for ever.

HIS UNFINISHED MESSAGE.

"I HAVE a message to give to the world," he said, wearily.

There was a huge mirror fixed into the dark oak walls of the room opposite to where he sat, and, as he spoke, he caught a glimpse of himself, started and smiled—the smile of one who had lived in vain, whose career had been one long and utterly despairing struggle against the existence thrust on him without his consent. The mirrored face looked back smiling, too, so utterly tired, so intensely world-worn, that he laughed aloud and started at the sound of his own laughter.

"I must deliver my message first," he mused aloud.

Then he picked up a long strip of coloured silk and covered his reflection carefully.

"It's too much, as I shall look when I'm dead," and he gave another short laugh.

The gleaming ruddy light of the wood fire danced on the panelled walls, on which hung brilliant sketches of Italian and Grecian landscapes, little living pictures on which the firelight played, bringing out their light-

hearted beauty to brighten the dark room. Tiger and leopard skins were flung carelessly over the polished floor, and a great bronze figure held in its outstretched arms a crimson-shaded lamp, now burning low. On the wide mantelpiece, the tables, everywhere, curious trophies from far Eastern and Northern countries, mingled with bowls full of peculiar foreign flowers, great scentless masses of bloom, a piano, wide open, with piles of music, emotional and passionate songs strewn all over the stool and music stands, and Maurice Kennard, with his weary young face, about to cut himself off from all the world holds fast and—to wilfully send his soul drifting, drifting—whither?

On the writing table with his pen and paper, he carefully placed the little bottle of sweet, subtle, Eastern liquid that was to send him to his everlasting sleep, and he looked at it longingly.

"Not yet, but soon—soon."

He had a message to give to the world, and he sat down to deliver it.

"Of unsound mind," I can hear those twelve blatant fools with dim notions of giving me a chance of Paradise, of cheating the world, themselves, and the Creator into believing me mad. I can hear them say it: they will come in and look at me with my hands folded, and, perhaps, some well-meaning idiot will put a pile of roses or sweet innocent lilies upon my breast. The peace of death will be on me; it's Christmas night, and I'm young, too young for death. An effective scene! Lord! what sham foolery and hypocrisy is this Christian burial, and I tell you that to place those emblems of all that's pure and good on the bosoms of most of those who rest is an insult to their Maker! Imagine! the soulless clay of a confirmed drunkard buried beneath a wealth of violets or snowdrops! And I also swear I take my eternal rest voluntarily; that I am sane now if anyone is sane in this mad world of ours, and God have mercy on my soul, for I am no Atheist, no Darwinian struggling back to monkeydom, but a

Christian. Yes, laugh if you will! it sounds curious, too, even to myself—a Christian and a suicide, damned from the hour of birth, dogged, cursed by the awful relentless justice of the God who made me, and yet, my heaven, what a struggle it has been! If I could have disbelieved in a soul, in an immortal part of my being, then I should live on living my life of pleasure, drinking the fire and sweetness of the wine that is my ruin till I sank into a drunkard's unhallowed grave; but here it is! This is my ever-torturing problem, the problem I solve to-night. Is it better to die with a soul lost, damned through the foul excesses steeped in the spirits I loathe yet cannot shun, or is it better to send my soul adrift before I've sunk too low to care or believe that the immortal soul exists? I say rather the suicide than the besotted drunkard. Life is too hard for me, and yet I'm no coward, but cannot face the awful unspeakable inevitable. The wine's bubble and glitter, the amber and rose juices tempt me, madden me, and compel me against myself, and why? Long ago, when the cruel world was young, it was decreed "The sins of the father shall be visited on the children." I, cursing and loathing, have reaped the whirlwind with teeth on edge, and this my curious dread of losing all traces of God's image hurries me to take away all chances of —" Maurice Kennard had got so far with his message, when "My God! what's that," he cried suddenly; he started up with beating heart and damp brow, looking wildly around him. There again! and then again through the stillness of the night, piercing the room he occupied, echoed an awful despairing cry, the cry of someone in awful absolute agony. Again it came, and throwing off the feeling of numbness that had held him, Maurice flung open his door and walked down the dark, wide staircase into the hall. The household was deep in sleep, sleeping off the effects of their Christmas revels, in which their master had had no part, and he sneered bitterly as he reflected on his de-

pendants sleeping while death was among them.

Again that awful cry for help; no one apparently but himself heard it, piercing though the sound was; he hurried on quickly, unbolted the heavy front door and stood bareheaded in the street. Great hurrying masses of cloud swept the clear sky and dashed fiercely across the face of the brilliant moon, who peered out mysteriously from their enveloping misty folds. Snow was softly, gently covering the sleeping world, but there was nothing from whom that cry could come visible to Maurice, as he glanced up and down the street; nothing but rows of solid houses greeted his eye, and as the sound was not again repeated, he was about to re-enter the house, when a faint moan made him look down with a stifled exclamation, for on the pavement, close to where he stood, was what appeared to be an inanimate huddled up bundle. Whatever it was the feeble moan proceeded from it, and Maurice, after a moment's involuntary loathing and shrinking from the object, laughed, "The last act of my life shall be one I'm not ashamed of, a suicide need not be too particular as to what or whom he touches," and stooping, he picked the bundle up carefully in his arms and re-entered the house. He stumbled up the dark staircase smiling grimly to himself, but the light figure he held against him sent a thrill of long forgotten tenderness and pity through his heart, and on entering his room he caught a glimpse of the face that rested on his shoulder.

"Merciful Heaven it's a woman!" he cried aloud.

There was no stir, no movement from the little figure he carried, so crossing to the sofa he put her gently down among the rugs and cushions and stirred the fire, which blazed up and sent a ruddy flame which illuminated the silent figure with a curious radiance.

The heavy black hood that had concealed her face and head had fallen back, and the pale face with its masses of golden curls lay on the cushions; her eyes were fast closed

and her gentle even breathing told him that whatever the agony she had before been enduring, now, at least, she was sleeping as peacefully and happily as any child. Maurice moved close to her and watched her quietly; there she lay fast asleep, and he watching became aware of a peculiar sense of familiarity; he had seen her before, seen her many times, and it was with a feeling of new sweetness, peace, and rest, that he knelt down suddenly beside her and pressed his lips to her red mouth. There was no feeling of sacrilege in this action; she was as it were some dear one that had belonged to him, had been his once, ages before he knew himself to be what he was. His caress awakened her: she opened her blue eyes wide and smiled solemnly, tenderly upon him.

"Maurice," she said softly, and her voice reminded him dimly of some song he could just remember, having heard when quite young, "Maurice, it is so long since I saw you last; you've been cruel to me love, cruel."

A feeling of intense shame and sorrow kept Maurice silent; what had he done in the past to hurt this girl, this strangely familiar child?

Her voice continued:

"You shut me from you, you sent me away so often, but I knew at last you would love me; you caused me such pain to-night, Christmas night, and you were cruel!"

She glanced at the writing table and his eyes fell before hers.

"I cried and you heard at last, at last. Peace on earth for you and me. Peace, peace!"

"I've loved you always somewhere, I remember you, I——" struggling with some vague feeling that he was speaking in a dream to another dream figure.

She clasped both her arms round his neck and pulled his face down beside her own.

"You do not know me now, dear one, I——" she seemed melting from his arms; he tried passionately to retain her, but afar off her voice came to him——

"I am Hope."

The grey dawn was stealing into his room through the drawn curtains, and Maurice started and raised his head from the table on which it had fallen. There lay his unfinished message, there lay the unopened bottle, and he looked round him curiously. He glanced at the sofa on which he had placed his visitor last night, then rose and drew back the curtains.

Over in the East the sun was beginning to struggle faintly through the clouds; the world was one unbroken mass of snow, and its awful purity and stillness held him silent. He threw open the window, undid the cork from the little bottle of his precious sleeping draught, and it stained the fairness of the white outside.

"I went to sleep and it was a dream," he said quietly, "only a dream of Hope, but who knows? We may be only dreaming when we think we are awake, and when we dream who knows but it's only then we really wake. 'Peace on Earth' she said. Hope has come to me, and come to stay."

And Maurice Kennard "took up his burden of life again." His message for the world, the world never saw; but in the one great book he wrote the year he died, was a grand and noble message that would live in the world for ever.

GRACE ISABEL HARRISON.





— — September marched eke on foot,
Yet was he heavy laden with the spoil
Of harvest's riches. — —

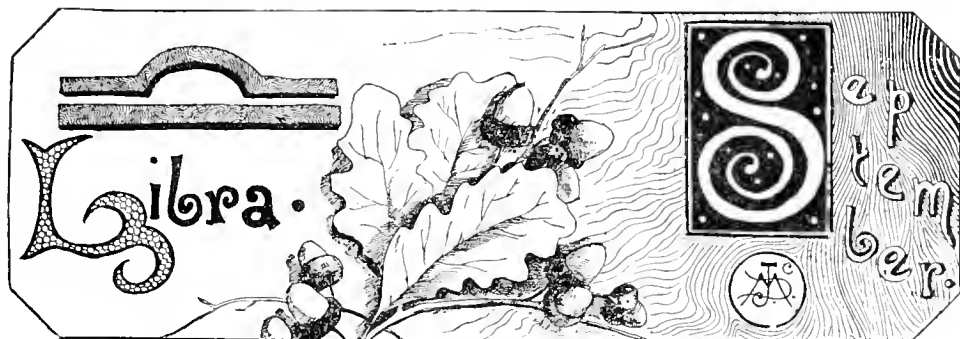
PERHAPS the chiefest characteristic of the month of September is an air of serene repose. All the work of Summer has been accomplished, and September is the month of fulfilment, when the harvests of grain are gathered in, and trees are laden with ripe fruit. We pass from the swift onward rush of the summer to a season of quiet restful waiting, when Nature seems to be allowing herself a short breathing space before she closes her hand upon the earth, in the grip of the first frosts, that herald the approach of winter.

September, as its name indicates, stood as seventh month in the Latin and Roman Calendars: *Septem*, seven, and a contraction of *imber*, a shower of rain, as the rainy season was supposed to commence at this time. It was dedicated by the Romans to Vulcan. The more modern Saxons called it *Harfest-monat*, or harvest month, when they altered the original title of August, which before alluded to harvest, to *wood-monat*. But after Christianity was established, September was called *Hilig-monat*, or holy month, in reference to some important religious ceremonies, which were then observed. In the very earliest representations of September, it was depicted by a boar-hunt, and men armed with spears; after the alteration in the title of August, September was represented as a vintager. But it was also drawn as a man of cheerful countenance, clothed in a purple robe, with a coronet of white and purple grapes. In the left hand he held a small

bundle of oats, and in the right a cornucopia of pomegranates and other fruits, and a balance; this latter in token of the sign *Libra*, which the sun enters on the 23rd of this month, and makes the autumnal equinox, typified by the *balance*, when heat and cold are supposed to be equally striving for predominance.

September 1st is dedicated by the English Church to St. Giles, who was a native of Athens, and came into France in 715, when he was made Abbat of the Abbey at Nismes, in the province of Languedoc. He became the patron of beggars, from the fact that on one occasion a sick mendicant begged alms of him, whereupon St. Giles gave him his coat, and upon the man putting it on he was instantly miraculously cured. It is also related of him that he raised from the dead the son of a prince, and made a lame man whole. The Church of St. Giles, Cripplegate, was consecrated by him.

Bartholomew Fair annually took place on September 3rd: it originated in two fairs or markets, one for the clothiers of England and drapers of London, granted to the prior of the convent of St. Bartholomew, and held within the churchyard; the other granted to the City of London, for cattle and goods, held in the field of West Smithfield. The fair, for many years, lasted fourteen days, in 1735 it was restricted to three days, and afterwards to one day. The proclamation was read at the gate leading into Cloth Fair, by the lord mayor's attorney, and repeated after him by a sheriff's officer, in the presence of the lord mayor, the sheriffs and aldermen.



The procession next proceeded round Smithfield, and returned to the Mansion House, where in the afternoon the gentlemen of his lordship's household dined together at the sword bearer's table. This concluded the ceremonial.

The Festival of the *Exaltation of the Holy Cross* is commemorated on September 14th. The Emperor Heraclius recovered a large piece of the true cross, after Cosroes, King of Persia, had taken it away, in the plundering of Jerusalem, A.D. 615. Subsequently the relic was deposited in the Great Church of the Twelve Apostles, at Constantinople.

In Sherborne, Dorset, September 23rd is called "tolling-day" in commemoration of the death of John, Lord Digby, of Sherborne, and Earl of Bristol, in the year 1698. A codicil was annexed to his will in which he bequeathed ten pounds to the parish church, yearly and for ever, towards the reparation of the chancel, on condition that the bell was tolled for six full hours, from five to nine of the clock in the forenoon, and from twelve till two in the afternoon, on the anniversary of his death. The custom is annually observed, but the tolling of the bell is limited to two hours, instead of six. In the evening, divine service is held in the church, and a sermon suitable to the occasion preached by the vicar, for which, under the same will, he receives thirty pounds a year.

It has for long been the custom on September 29th, Feast of St. Michael and All Angels, to elect the governors of towns and cities, and all guardians of the peace of

men. A very singular practice existed at Kidderminster in connection with this custom. On the election of a bailiff, all the inhabitants assemble in the principal streets, and when the town-house bell rings out the signal for the fray "lawless hour" as it is called begins, and everybody throws cabbage-stalks at his neighbours. This hour over, the bailiff-elect and corporation in their robes, preceded by drums and fifes, visit the old and new bailiffs, attended by the mob, while in the meantime the most respectable families in the neighbourhood have been invited to meet and throw apples at them on their entrance.

The ingenuity of antiquaries has been much exercised regarding the old custom of eating goose on Michaelmas Day. By a current, but erroneous tale, the introduction of the usage is assigned to Queen Elizabeth. She is alleged to have dined with Sir Neville Humfreville on her way to Tilbury Fort, September 29th, 1588. The knight knowing her fondness for highly-seasoned dishes, had provided a goose, and after dinner she drank a half-pint bumper of Burgundy to the destruction of the Spanish Armada. Soon after this she received the joyful news that her wishes had been fulfilled, so she commemorated the day by having goose for dinner annually, in remembrance of Sir Neville's entertainment.

But the custom was evidently of much older origin, for as early as the tenth year of Edward the Fourth's reign, one John de la Hay was bound to render to William Barnaby, Lord of Lastres, in the county of

Hereford, for a parcel of the demesne lands, one goose fit for the lord's dinner on the feast of St. Michael the Archangel.

I will conclude with two curious customs for September 30th, which take place at the Court of Exchequer. After the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London have proceeded there from Guildhall, and the various ceremonies having been gone through, are arranged upon tiers and benches, the crier of the court steps forward and makes the proclamation for the one who does homage for the Sheriff's of London, to "stand forth and do his duty." The senior Alderman below the chair then rises, and the usher of the court hands him a bill-hook; the usher then takes a small bundle of sticks, which he holds in both hands slightly above the table, while the alderman cuts it asunder. The bill-hook is then exchanged for a small hatchet, and a similar bundle of sticks served in the same manner. In this ceremony the alderman does suit and service for the Corporation of London, as tenant of a manor in Shropshire, in token of its having been customary for the tenants of that manor to supply their lord with fuel.

The same proclamation is then made for the Sheriff of Middlesex, and the alderman counts and declares the number of six horse-shoes placed upon the table. A tray is next handed to him, containing sixty-one hobnails, which he also counts, and in answer to two interrogations twice declares their number. This is for suit and service of the owner of a forge which once stood in St. Clement's parish, but no longer exists. The origin of the latter usage was a grant in 1235, from Henry III. to Walter de Bruin, a farrier, of a piece of ground to erect the said forge, he paying annually to the Exchequer a quit rent of six horse-shoes, with the nails belonging to them. In process of time, the ground vested in the city, and though now lost to it, the city still renders the quit rent.

GERTRUDE OLIVER-WILLIAMS.

THE FRENCH GALLERY.

OF all the art galleries in London, the French Gallery in Pall Mall is certainly one of the most interesting. It is an exhibit of choice works of art, examples of the great French masters, at once *unique* and representative. Here and there we come across a picture illustrating the Spanish school, but these innovations are few and far between, and only go to show the difference in feeling, colour and technique, to no detriment of either school.

There are two pictures by Heffner in this gallery that must command attention. The first is Durham Cathedral, an early morning effect. Here the artist shows his deep study of aerial perspective; the sky luminous and attractive, and shown up by the sombre colours of the middle distance, embracing the cathedral with its two solid Norman towers. The water, reflecting the sky, is limpid and sensitive, and if the composition of the foreground is somewhat stilted, the rest of the picture makes full amends.

The second example by the same artist, "After the Flood," is only marred by the straight horizon line which traverses the canvas. This line he has endeavoured to break by boats and trees, but still there it is, rampant and militant against the eye. But the beautiful handling of the sky and the water makes up for all; low in tone, cautious in detail, it is an admirable *toute ensemble*.

Perhaps the most wonderful picture, as far as detail and grouping is concerned, in the gallery, is the little picture of the reconciliation between Gainsborough and Reynolds. It will be remembered that these two great artists were much opposed on artistic subjects, yet when the one heard the other was sick unto death, he waived such paltry matters, and, feeling in his heart the genius of the other, came to console him in his extremity. The picture portrays this scene, and the accuracy of the detail is marvellous.



The Artist

SUNSHINE.

1894.

There, on the wall, is seen the picture of Mrs. Gainsborough, a picture, which has been valued at £25,000. The attitude and expression of the two great painters is perfect, and the surroundings of carpet, hangings and furniture are worked out in a truly marvellous way. The picture is painted by Seiler, and is called "The Reconciliation."

"Words of Comfort," by A. Holmberg, is an admirable representation of facial expression. Tenderly treated, without straining for effects, it shows the two old churchmen comforting one another over what they perhaps think are the ways of this wicked world. The colour, pose, and technique are particularly charming, and in the grouping of the two figures no glaring colours are aggressive to the eye.

Lovers of the French school will not fail to visit this charming gallery, so full of art and beautiful sentiment, where they will see, standing out pre-eminently, a lovely picture by Muncaksy, about the last he painted, entitled "Sunshine." We give an illustration with this article. The repose is perfect and the colour marvellous.

A COUNTRY-SIDE FESTIVAL.

THE old picturesque and characteristic customs of our English country-folk now survive only in very remote districts. Sophistication has penetrated to the uttermost verge of the rural populations, and it is in some locality where Nature has rendered good roads a difficulty, and railways almost impossible, that we have to search if we would come across such customs. Even then they are frequently found to have suffered a change: the village festival has become a town fair, the significance of decorating the church tower with foliage has lost itself in the more absorbing pursuit of shying at the cocoanut, the well-dressing has

deteriorated into an unmeaning excuse for a general holiday, and the mop has so degenerated as to be a disgrace even to its forbears, at any rate, as far as its picturesqueness is concerned, for mops were ever sad scenes of drunken mirth.

A custom which, if not of great antiquity, is of respectable age, still exists in a number of country parishes, and in spite of the presence of Board Schools and more recent Parish Councils, remains essentially rural in all its being and doing: the annual procession, or walk of the Club. The Club is the institution to which the countryman looks, when aid in sickness or through accident, is required for himself or his family. It is often a branch of the Ancient Order of Foresters, or the Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes, or it may be an offshoot of some other similar organisation. It holds its meetings at the Inn of the village, and appoints its secretary, who collects its subscriptions and distributes its blessings. It has its other officers, all endowed with some special function or privilege. In the Lodges, as the local branches are called, of the Ancient Order of Foresters, there are the Chief Ranger and his subordinates, and on occasions of great importance the Chief Ranger dons the costume and the insignia of his office.

Such an occasion is provided in the annual club-walking, when the Chief Ranger rides a horse, carefully led by attendant squires, as though he had never mounted a steed before. The slow marching of the procession, and the particular gravity of those included in it, are things worth witnessing, for here is the true bucolic spirit of the old days of the country existent still in its ancient character.

Away in the hills which rear themselves between Derbyshire and North Staffordshire may be found a primitive race, with dialect and customs as old as the hills themselves almost, and inherited from ancestors who lived here generation after generation. The people are hardy, thrifty, and industrious, they do not care for new ideas, and they

prefer, for the most part, to struggle against the same conditions which beset the lives of their fathers before them, than by the adoption of new things to ameliorate them. Consequently, they remain struggling, but they have the courage of their convictions, and they are consequently very independent, and very honest, and very close-fisted.

Nature is against them, and it is the constant fight with Nature which has made the race a tenacious one. A snow storm which renders the roads impassable for a fortnight is no rare thing, and to have to cut through a twenty-feet drift, and to drive or walk twenty-five miles to the market town, seven miles distant, has taught them to be prepared for emergencies, and to treat with unconcern, what would strike others with dismay and despair.

Among such people an old custom is likely to survive: much more likely than that a new custom should be introduced. Consequently, the method of butter-making leaves something to be desired. But if one shrinks from the butter, one may very well fall back on the cheese, for although thin, it is good, for the country is near the Cheshire border. Were it not for the cheese, there would often be but scant fare for the casual traveller in these regions, for never were less enterprising inn-keepers than are to be found here, and the provisioning of the larder is a lost art. For the inn-keeper exercises a dual role: he is farmer as well as mine host; for so few are the travellers and so scattered the population, that often his position as landlord is almost a sinecure. As the farms are all small and the farmers have no large ideas, their mode of living is not extravagant, and so it comes about that only simple fare and beer of moderate quality will reward the chance caller at the hostels of this country-side.

Once a year, however, Boniface completely eclipses Hodge, and rises to the occasion, superior to the little difficulties which an unaccustomed position thrusts in his path. A groaning board greets the fasting Forester,

for feeding, too, is a part of the festive function of Club-walking. The Club Feast is the pivot upon which the day's proceedings turn, for after its conclusion, the female portion of the village community join the revel, and add grace, as well as a certain amount of restraint, to the proceedings.

The day of the Club-walking comes just before the hay harvest, when Nature is maturing the growth of man's setting, and man is waiting for the psychological moment when the operations of ingathering shall commence. By way of a mild excitement, and as an incentive to future activity, the whole family of the hill-side farmer, and his scanty following of farm-hands, turn out. At ten o'clock in the morning the brass band from a neighbouring village uncouthly enters upon the scene. Its members are attired in their Sunday trousers of grey or brown tweed, a fearful imitation of a military tunic, with painful creases back and front, and abnormally elongated sleeves, and a cap which remotely resembles that of the rifleman of thirty years ago. The appearance of the band is fitly matched by its performance, and its brazen strains are only tolerable to town ears at a respectful and respectable distance.

On the arrival of the band, the Chief Ranger unostentatiously makes his appearance, followed by his attendants. He is attired in gorgeous apparel. It is a suit of woodland green, but for the brown-check trousers. The tunic provides the colour-key, and is further covered with tinsel and gold braid and silken cords, and over the buttoned-breast of it is hung the paste-jewel insignia of the Order, suspended on a broad emerald-green ribbon, carefully and wonderfully embroidered. Over his left shoulder is suspended by a thick cord, the zinc-mounted cow's-horn, which is always a special feature of your Forester. In his hand is the great bow, and at his side a quiver of arrows. Perhaps the most striking feature of the costume is the head-dress, however—a structure of huge size and superfluous millinery, with waving plumes

from the African desert, and the prevailing tone of green is the colour of the velvet covering. Its brim is marvellously broad, and its flat-topped crown is prodigiously high. Beneath it beams and glitters the subdued satisfaction of the Chief Ranger. What a noble countenance is thus partially hidden! Only an English Teniers could adequately do it justice. It is the bucolic symbolised and triumphant; it is the apotheosis of rusticity, and it is bashfulness and vanity striving after a satisfactory amalgam.

The sub-rangers are only less gorgeously arrayed than their chief, and only less proud, with, however, a *souffron* of fitting humility due to their subsidiary position, but inspired by a gleam of hope that one day they also may occupy the coveted position. Then acolytes shortly bring out the steed, quiet and sedate, as fitting the occasion, but gaily caparisoned withal, upon which, after infinite trouble by reason of his accoutrements, the Chief Ranger is at length mounted. The horse and rider are led forward, and the head and fount of the procession is formed. Immediately behind are Foresters in motley attire, but all wearing some part of the trappings belonging to the Lodge, or to themselves. These dwindle down from an apron or a scarf, to a mere piece of ribbon round the arm or a rosette on the coat, which have to satisfy the humble followers at the end of the train. Among them are distributed the symbols of the Order—horns, compasses, swords, tridents, and other objects, and by two of the sturdiest, the great painted symbolical banner is held aloft, its lower corners controlled by heavy hanging tassels, subordinates carrying flags and smaller banners.

The strains of the band break forth after two or three partly abortive attempts, and the procession sets off down the hill for its two-mile progress to the neighbouring parish church. Everything is done quietly and in order, except the musical part of the programme. The church is reached, and the short service is succeeded by a homily of

sixty minutes, which is ingeniously disregarded by the not-impatient Foresters assembled. At its close, however, there is a distinctly audible shuffle of relief, and the cavalcade re-forms outside the churchyard gate. Its progress is, however, shortly to be arrested, for down the quaint village street, with its progression of cottage, hedgerow, well, and garden, is to be seen—the last house—"The Three Horse Shoes."

Our Foresters are completely restored by the sight, and the long-continued gravity of countenance relaxes, and they become mere men once more. As such, their imperative demand is for beer, and a plentiful supply is soon forthcoming on the scrubbed oak tables, with their tressel legs placed under the eaves for the occasion. Hereafter the glory of the procession is departed. The sermon and the beer combined have vitiated the solemnity of the occasion, and the process is further facilitated by the production of tobacco and pipes.

The members of the Club are now happier, though less dignified, and there is but one thing which is powerful enough to move them from their present quarters. It is the inner man that whispers of the banquet which may be partaken of for the mere trouble of walking quietly the two miles of sleepy country road that lie between the "Three Horse Shoes" and the "Blacksmith's Arms." The stimulus is sufficient, the promptings are all powerful, and the procession, now but a caricature of its former stateliness, wends its erratic and expansive way to dinner.

The Club is reinforced now by several of the larger farmers of the district, the Club doctor, and a few outside friends, and these take the carving in hand, while the wives of some of the Club members act as serving women, and get flustered in their efforts to supply potatoes and greens to several persons at the same time. The banquet is a mixed one, and consists of various large joints of roast and boiled beef and mutton, each joint being dealt with in turn by the diners. A

considerable amount of time, and a very considerable amount of food, is thus consumed. The joints at length give place to the sweets, and a special dish at this function is plum-pudding, served with brandy sauce, and accompanied on the same plate by a large helping of rice-pudding. This is much sought after, and is really very good, and if only a sufficiency of the previous course has been accomplished, the difference of a bit of pudding more or less is inappreciable. The dinner has, of course, not been without its libations of ale, served from huge jugs into tankards and glasses, with a head.

When satiety is reached, which is not soon, speech is loosened, and the wags of the party exercise their wit by calling on their duller friends for an oration.

"Ay, ay, Mester, wey mun hev bit tongue-waggin' afore wey moves," agrees the chairman of the long table.

"Get they ont' they fate Colin, and gie us word or two; wey wunna mek they sea much, lad," says another.

"Nay!" says Colin, looking at the empty plates and dishes with a vacant stare.

More appeals of a similar character are made with like results, for the dwellers in these parts are not born orators.

After their ineffectual attempts at jollity a move is made outside, where it speedily becomes apparent that the members of the visiting band and some few others have dined not wisely, but too well, and they generally retire until their services are again required.

The Chief Ranger and his two right-hand men now come in for some chaff, for, outside once more, they have diffidently resumed their brave livery.

"Has't got fine feathers back thin, Mester?" says one who aspires to wear the same. "Ay, Mester, thou lookst gaudy in 'em!" "Dost they feel grand, Mester?"

"They do sea, Mester John, as how fine feathers mek th' fine bird, but I dunno know where weyed find ony feathers may happen would mek they a fine bird, John!"

replies the Ranger, and his sally is well received.

"Nay, lads, they couldstna mek birds wi' feathers; they mun be hatched outen egg by un fair-settin broody hen afore they bey bird, I do reckon," an old farm-hand from the remotest portions of the district quavers.

"Ay, James, ayes reet thee're, is James," is chorussed by those standing around.

With such conversation and games of an equally enlivening description, the time is whiled away until the long upper chamber of the inn has been changed from dining-hall to ball-room, and such of the band as are capable, are stationed at the further end from the door, making only half-successful attempts to look dignified in their uniforms.

At length the opening bars of a quadrille are performed in a fearful and wonderful way, and various couples take their places for the dance. The spirits of all begin to rise with the dust, and by the time the dance is finished everyone is jolly and fortified with a determination to bravely make the best of life.

Dance follows dance, and as one bandsman succeeds to the influence of sleep, another arouses himself to take the vacant place, and so the fun goes on. Everyone drinks either lemonade or beer, and all keep merry and avoid quarrelling. The girls are bravely bedecked, and the men in futilely starched collars and dickies, and polite in a generous, ungraceful fashion. Those who do not dance sit closely round the sides of the room with their feet turned in under the benches to avoid smashed toes.

After a while, an almost imperceptible change comes over the scene; a couple steal away into the darkness, thinking themselves unobserved. Then another pair, having noticed the facility and secrecy with which the first accomplished the business, go and do likewise, and the pleasures of the dance gradually decline, and older folks think and talk of getting the horse in for the drive home.

The unwilling steeds now stand about

harnessed to the several quaint equipages, while putting glasses are drunk, and anticipations of the recurrence of this day next year are indulged in. The wandering couples are brought in and sorted, and so Club Day ends, and its innocent amusements, with a slow quiet drive, or a more reckless and less subdued one, if it be a bachelor party, in the stillness of the night, to the isolated home-steads of the members, on the sides and in the hollows of the hills.

KINETON PARKES.

C ONSTRUCTION.

I AM heading this paper "Construction" because our class might feel offended at the onset if I were to head it "Grammar." Did we not all learn grammar at school, get up and down in class for it, rattle off the rules with ease and fluency? Why, I know one girl who used them for her singing exercises, because she found the examples gave her better practice in expression than the monotonous "a a a" of the book. I have heard her sing "The moon appears and she shines, but the light is not her own; Parliament is assembled; the King and the Queen have put on their robes" by the half-hours together; and she learnt about as much grammar in the process as the ordinary girl learns from the mechanical recitation of grammatical rules.

We speak correct grammar, supposing, of course, that we do speak it, because we hear it spoken. In writing, we lose the help of the ear. Moreover we try, most of us, to use a finer language than that which satisfies us in ordinary speech, so mistakes creep in. Those who write good grammar, are those who write it instinctively for the most part. That is to say, those who have the gift of expression—those to whom it comes naturally to put their meaning into

the fewest possible words which will convey it clearly. Anyone who does this, is in no danger of writing bad grammar, though she may not know syntax from prosody. She avoids bad grammar in avoiding confusion, for bad grammar and confusion are one.

I do not mean in the case of the well-known and accepted errors of comic, or dialect writing. When we know an error is an error, it does not confuse us. It is the verb in the wrong case or number, or the pronoun in the wrong tense, occurring in the middle of a sentence professing to be good English, that obscures the writer's meaning and irritates the reader, more especially the "publisher reader" into throwing aside the article.

I believe I may say that every single member of our School of Journalism has good ideas, and that means, of course, a chance of success in literature. Some few have the knack of making their ideas as clear to their readers as they are to themselves. Some are in such a hurry to write, that they do not stop to make sure their ideas are clear to themselves to start with. Others know very well what they mean themselves, but fail to make their readers know it, because they do not understand the one means of communication between writer and reader; and language plays such very strange tricks with those who do not understand it.

Now these writers who have something to say, but lack the natural gift of saying it, can easily acquire the knowledge how to say it. Doubtless they learned how to say it at school, if they had only known what they were learning, but they did not. They can only go back to the study of mere grammar. Not, of course, to school books—the old familiar rules would carry the old familiar lack of meaning—but practically, each for herself; they will find that just as the science of perspective rests on the foundation of one far-reaching rule—if you understand that, the rest is easy—so one rule, if it were understood and thoroughly carried out, would save every writer from bad grammar and the

confusion consequent on it. "Every word in a sentence must 'match' every word to which it relates," that is, be of the same number, gender, &c.

Of course, everyone knows that. "A verb must agree with its nomination," "a pronoun with its noun," and so on, but they fail to carry out the rule, because they do not stop to think which words do relate to each other. In a short easy sentence, no one can make a mistake. No one is likely to say "I were" for I was, or "I asks" for I ask, but the moment the sentences are lengthened, the moment the nominative is separated from its verb by descriptive clauses or parentheses, the mistakes begin. Odd words seem to lie about unclaimed, because the writer does not know to which part of the sentence they belong.

A sentence—I am trying not to be technical—a sentence must be something said about something; it may be something said about something, in relation to something else.

Grammar calls the thing you speak of, "the subject"; the thing you say of it, the predicate; and the third thing, the object.

Many people who write excellent English, neither know nor care anything of these three things, but those who do not write clearly by nature, will never acquire the power of doing so until they know them thoroughly, and can tell which is which at a glance.

Your subject, of course, is bound to be a noun—you can't talk about anything else—it remains a noun though you qualify it with any number of adjectives of any kind (of course the fewer the better, but that is a question of style, not grammar). A hat remains a hat, whether it is merely a pretty hat, or the hat in the saratoga trunk in the back room on the third story, or the hat your aunt gave you, because the one you bought at Jones's sale got wet at the Farquhar's picnic.

The predicate is always a verb, and remains a verb, no matter with what adverbs or adverbial phrases you qualify it, for only

a verb can tell what a noun is or does, or what is done to it.

The object is a noun like the subject, and may be qualified in exactly the same way, but being the object is, of course, always in the objective case. If you say the hat your aunt gave you, etc., is very pretty, "hat" is the subject; and "is very pretty," the predicate. If you say, "You wore the hat your aunt, etc.,"—"the hat," is the object; "wore," the predicate; and "you," the subject.

I do not pretend to be teaching grammar—at most only quack grammar—a trick to find out which words must harmonise with each part of the sentences, and how to make it clear to your readers what you are really talking about.

One of our scholars last month, in an essay, expressing very sensible views, wrote a sentence something like this:—

"The influence of the society instead of being for good, by its officious meddlesomeness and want of discrimination has incurred a vote of censure," etc.

Now, if this writer had realised that her subject was the "influence of the society," and not the society itself, there would have been no confusion. Not knowing her subject, she gave a predicate which did not "match," and so conveyed no definite meaning to her readers.

Another writer having left her subject far behind, and separated it from her predicate by descriptive phrases, forgot it was in the singular number, and used a plural verb, with most bewildering results, and yet she, too, had sensible things to say, and is a very promising scholar.

The subject for next month will be a short Bank Holiday article, such as almost every paper publishes the day following the first Monday in August, but any one who wishes to do so may test her powers of construction, by dividing her papers into three columns, and writing the subject of each sentence in the first, the predicate in the second, and the object, if any, in the third.



DAY DREAMS.

Resting beneath a peaceful cedar, near an old ancestral hall,

Fancy took my wandering spirit, captive in her magic thrall.

Every ruined stone before me, wasted, scarred, by years of strife,

Near the charms of sweet enchantment warms anew to light and life.

And the old neglected garden, over which the north wind blows,

Quick becomes my lady's pleasure, sweet with clematis and rose.

Peacocks pace the stately terrace, summer scents perfume the air,

All the glorious summer sunshine of a fairyland is there.

Lords and ladies, knights and squires, merry jester, saucy page,

Pass before me in succession actors of a bygone age.

Sounds of revels ring around me, viol, horn, and clarinet,

And his lordship leads my lady, thro' gavotte and minuet;

Or another music tells me of the hunters bawling near,

Calling to the triumphant falcon, or the death-note of the deer.

Yet again the picture changes stern Crusaders, Roundheads quaint,

Pilgrims through the quiet cloisters, wandering palmer, holy saint.

Suddenly the white-throat wakes me, with her love song's wild refrain,

By a sudden transit brings me, back to present time again.

Near me stands the old sundial, girt around with graven rhyme;

While its motto, "tempus fugit," bids me heed the flight of Time.

E. MAUDE ALDERSON.

There are few people who wear precious stones, or the beautiful imitations which are scarcely perceptible to the unskilled eye, that are aware of the delicate manipulation which such gem or crystal has to go through

before it is presentable for sale. The same art as applied to the gem is used for the crystal, strictly speaking quartz, in its various stages, and the greatest accuracy and delicacy is required by the lapidary in the production of both. It would not be untruthful to say that at least 75 per cent. of the ornaments worn to-day by ladies and gentlemen are imitations, and of such a subtle nature as to deceive even an expert. In the first instance, as far as imitation is concerned, there is no necessity to make any alteration in the raw material of the quartz. The piece is selected according to size and is fixed to the end of a stick, by means of cement. It is then ground into shape on a circular gun-metal disc, which disc is charged with diamond dust, and revolves by means of a lever handle worked by the lapidary. No stone is complete unless it shows sixty-six facets including the table and culet, which obviously involves an enormous amount of the most careful labour. Passing from the hands of the lapidary the stone then comes into the mounter's hands, whose work it is to mount the oyst in a design of either silver or gold, as best suited to the shape and dimensions of the stone, and from the mounter's hands it passes to the setter's, and from here to the polisher's. In the case of imitation rubies and emeralds, the colours required in imitation are obtained by fusion, the ruby with calcium, and the emerald with copperas. Here the same process, as far as the lapidary is concerned, has to be gone through, always allowing for the shape of stone to be cut. Sometimes it occurs that after cutting star stones little flaws in the shape of specks are discovered, which entail more labour to cut away, and, of course, reduce the size of the stone. The amount of labour, training, and care required for crystals or quartz is best illustrated by a visit to the Parisian Diamond Company's exhibit at the Victorian Era Exhibition, Earl's Court, where the lapidaries are daily at work.

A TALANTA CLUB.

IS A LONG LIFE DESIRABLE?

THERE are two views to be considered in endeavouring to answer this question the individual and the general. The aim and object of the pleasure-seeking man is to make life minister to him and gratify his tastes and fancies. While it does this the longer it is the better. In living so, however, a man degrades and weakens his best qualities, and blunts all, thereby defeating the very end for which he strives. To such, life daily loses its attractions, and yet there is a real dread of losing it. The man who works with a motive to strengthen him, and a definite object in view, can only wish for a long life, provided health and strength are his and his object is unattained. When it is attained, and his work consequently finished, supposing it possible—nothing is left, and further years can only be looked upon as useless and wearisome. This must follow, be the work an intellectual or manual one. The economic value of a long life depends on the quantity and quality of work done during the time. If health, and strength, and capability of working accompany the years, then each additional one is desirable, otherwise not. From another point of view, however, an unproductive life may be considered to be of use in exercising the altruistic faculties of others, and so improving quality and tone.

OLIVE COMPTON BURNETT.

Is a question touched upon often with more lightness than it deserves. How often one hears the young—perhaps a girl of seventeen years, in the bloom of her youth—give out that she would not wish to live more than such and such an age? There is a carelessness in the speech, showing how little she appreciates her days. But if she attain that age, it is very, very doubtful if she still wish the same! And if such be the case, what a pitiful failure her former life must have been, and what despair she must be in to desire to end her days! For it is in the evening of life that one clings more and more to life. How often an aged one—perhaps over eighty years of age—or on a bed of sickness, will pray so earnestly to live just a year or two more! And it stands to reason, this state of mind must be right, for life is the gift of all others given to us. And a long life is desirable, in order to do as much as possible of that work in this world which is given us to do—that work which is ever left unfinished, and travels down to endless generations. It is the general opinion that the present, rushing competitive world we live in now is shortening the civilised life, and certain it is our forefathers had the advantage over us in the number of days they saw! but the difference of their mode of life and ours makes comparison ridiculous. Would Methuselah see his 969 years if he began life at the present day?

But I have no doubt that then, in the beginning of the world's history, he considered his life none too long, and I think it desirable that now, when the span of life, at the best, is so short, to cling to this mortal coil as much and for as long as is in our power.

MAUD TYNDALE.

FROM a physical aspect, no, a long life is not desirable; it means diminished powers, loss of vitality, many infirmities, ever-increasing weakness, if not actual disease. But from its mental, moral, and spiritual aspect, a long life *should* be desirable, though whether it should be so in fact depends entirely upon the nature of the individual life. Some men, on attaining physical maturity, cease to grow intellectually; their minds and ideas become so set and incapable of further expansions that with passing years they lose touch with present life, and physical and mental deterioration go together. Longevity cannot be desirable in such cases. Other men maintain the student attitude all their lives; their minds are ever open to, and receptive of new ideas; added years mean ripened powers, wider thought, larger views of humanity. Long life is desirable for such men; first because it means the enriching and deepening of their own mental, moral and spiritual life; second because their full powers and ripe experience make them as lodestars to their fellows. But even here there must be modifications; for after all a long life (either of good or of evil) may be crowded into a very short space of time. It is not so much the number of the years as the use made of them, which truly constitute a long life. "We should count time by heart throbs." I think that a long life is desirable only as it is *well* lived.

FLORENCE COULES.

A LONG life is surely desirable where the faculties and a fair amount of health and strength are its accompaniment. Youth is very lovely in its buoyant hopes, and high-hearted aspirations; middle age is beautiful in its power to fulfil them; but a serene and healthy old age is, I think, the crown to both. Undoubtedly its serenity must depend on the years that have gone by, as every harvest owes its fruit to the seed sown. But to a life of generous toil and unselfish love, old age must be in many ways a blessed close. It has to look back upon experiences too sweet to be painful, too full of love to yield room for bitterness; it still holds the joy of giving, it lives again in the youth around it, and there are, I believe, many old people who are really enjoying that part of their life which enables them to look on, and occasionally touch with guiding hand, though no longer taking personal share in life's work. Melancholy Jacques was no nearer truth when he described old age as "second childishness, and mere oblivion," than was brave old Adam when he said with good reason "Therefore my age is as a lusty winter, frosty but kindly," a winter whose snows are lit with love and gratitude, whose flowers, though faded, are yet the immortal blooms of fair deeds, nobly wrought.

A. BOSVILLE JAMES.

ATALANTA CLUB.

Subject for September: "Is character affected by climate?" Papers must not exceed *two hundred and fifty words*, and must be sent in on or before September 25th. Prizes of five shillings will be awarded to each of the four best papers, which will be published in the body of the Magazine.

ATALANTA READING UNION.

September being the end of the magazine year, the Reading Union competitions will be condensed into one—a short story, of not more than 3,000 words. Prizes of two guineas and one guinea respectively. The Editor reserves the right of publishing the prizes, if of sufficient merit.

ANSWERS TO SEARCH QUESTIONS (AUGUST).

I.

1. "The sorrows of true lovers' parting." Sir Thomas Wyatt.
2. From an MS. temp. Henry VIII.

II.

1. From "Morley's Ballets," 1595.
2. From "Songs of the chase," 1810.

III.

1. The inhabitants of Bucharina wear a round cloth bonnet, shaped after the Polish fashion, with a large fur border. They tie their kaftans about the middle with a girdle of silk crape. See "Veiled Prophet," Lalla Rookh.
2. The burning fountains of Brahma, near Chittogong, which are looked upon as holy.
3. It signifies in the old Persian language, Province, or region of the sun.

IV.

1. The Wanderer of Switzerland." Montgomery.
2. From an ancient, but figurative saying, that the nightingale leans his breast on a thorn while singing.

V.

1. Anne, daughter of Henry Somerset, Earl of Worcester.
2. "Tamburlaine the Great," or the Scythian Shepherd, an old ranting play, ascribed to Marlowe, 1590.

VI.

1. The noontide hag, in Gaelic *Glas-lich*, a gigantic female figure, was principally known about Knoidart.
2. The Lelia is the *Allah illa Allah* of the Mahomedan confession of faith.
3. Corresponding with our words "lad and lass."

SEARCH QUESTIONS FOR SEPTEMBER.

I.

Give authors of quotations

1. "Once did my thoughts both ebb and flow,
As passion did them move;
Once did I hope, straight fear again,
And then I was in love."
2. "Fain would I love, but that I fear
I quickly should the willow wear."
3. "The fire of love in youthful blood,
Like what is kindled in brushwood,
But for a moment burns;"

II.

1. What is it supposed the name "Ireland" is derived from?
2. What is meant by the "Wakon Bird"?

III.

1. Who is the author of the tragedy "The Siege of Damascus"?
2. Who wrote the poem "Advice to a Weaver of Tapestry"?

IV.

Find these quotations

1. "Gentle river, gentle river,
Lo, thy streams are stained with gore,
Many a brave and noble captain
Floats along thy willow'd shore"

2. "When Flora with her fragrant flowers
Bedeckt the earth so trim and gaye,
And Neptune with his daintye showers
Came to present the monthe of Maye."
3. "An ancient story I'll tell you anon
Of a notable prince, that was called King John."

V.

1. What was the "Jedwood-axe"?
2. Who was "Belted Will Howard"?

VI.

Put concluding lines to the quotations

1. "Come tell me where the maid is found,
Whose heart can love without deceit"
2. "When Time, who steals our years away,
Shall steal our pleasures too"
3. "And this is thy grave, Mac Caura,
Here by this pathway lone,"

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